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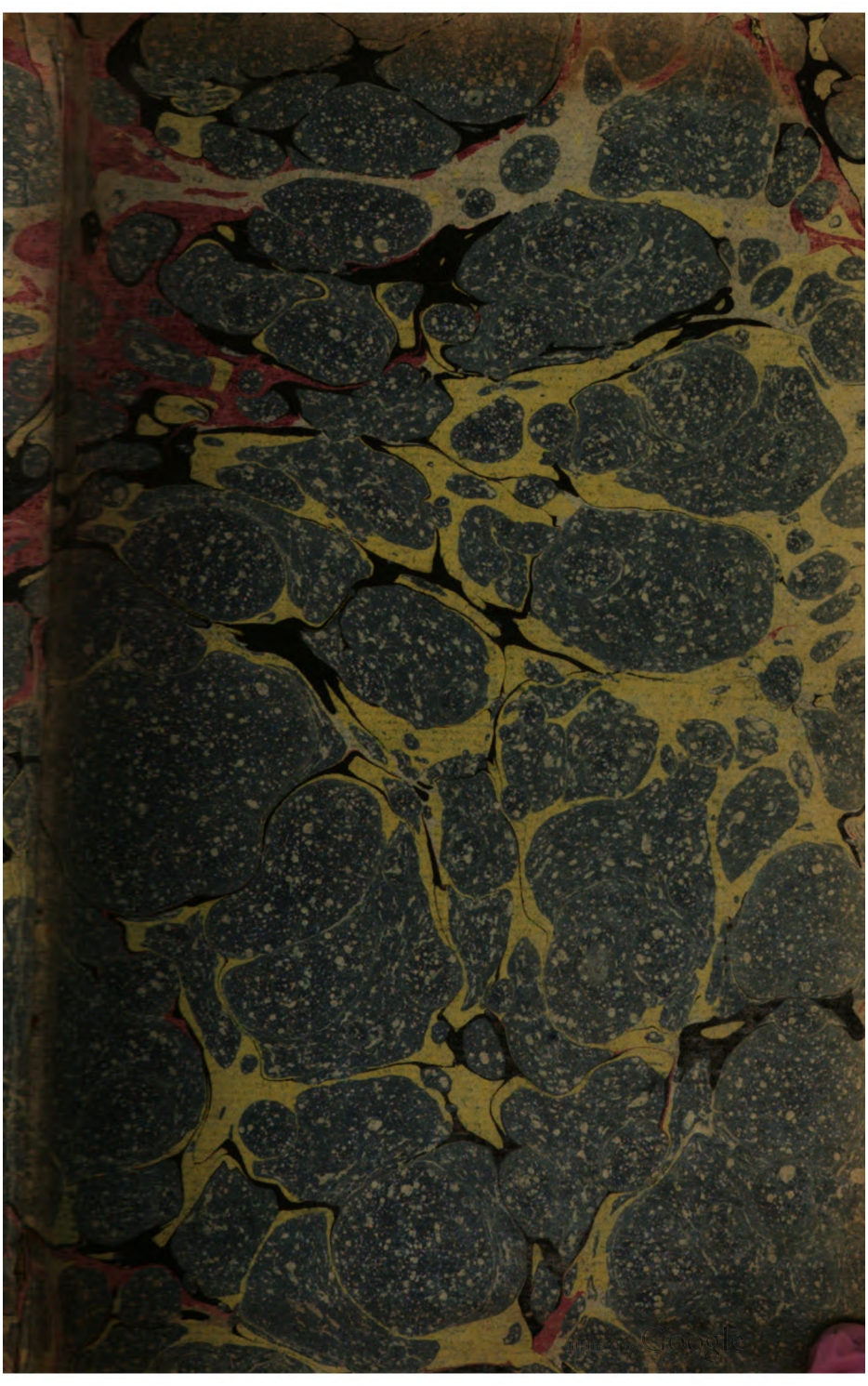

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Edwards, Jonathan.

THE

WORKS

OF

PRESIDENT EDWARDS,

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

VOLUME V.

CONTAINING

I. INQUIRY INTO THE MODERN PREVAILING NOTIONS OF FREEDOM OF WILL.

II. MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING THE DIVINE DECREES IN GENERAL AND ELECTION IN PARTICULAR.

III. CONCERNING EFFICACIOUS GRACE.

FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.

PUBLISHED AT WORCESTER,
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A

CAREFUL AND STRICT

INQUIRY

INTO THE

MODERN PREVAILING NOTIONS,

OF THAT

FREEDOM OF WILL,

WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO BE ESSENTIAL

TO

MORAL AGENCY, VIRTUE AND VICE, REWARD AND PUNISHMENT, PRAISE AND BLAME.

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PREFACE.

MANY find much fault with the calling professing Christians, that differ one from another in some matters of opinion, by distinct names; *especially calling them by the names of particular men, who have distinguished themselves as maintainers and promoters of those opinions; as the calling some professing Christians* Arminians, *from Arminius; others* Arians, *from Arius; others* Socinians, *from Socinus, and the like. They think it unjust in itself; as it seems to suppose and suggest, that the persons marked out by these names, received those doctrines which they entertain, out of regard* to, *and reliance* on, *those men after whom they are named; as though they made them their rule; in the same manner, as the followers of Christ are called* Christians; *after his name, whom they regard and depend upon, as their great Head and Rule. Whereas, this is an unjust and groundless imputation on those that go under the forementioned denominations. Thus (say they) there is not the least ground to suppose that the chief Divines, who embrace the scheme of doctrine which is, by many, called* Arminianism, *believe it the more, because Arminius believed it; and that there is no reason to think any other, than that they sincerely and impartially study the holy Scriptures, and inquire after the mind of Christ, with as much judgment and sincerity, as any of those that call them by these names; that they seek after truth, and are not careful whether they think exactly as Arminius did; yea, that, in some things, they actually differ from him. This practice is also esteemed actually injurious on this account, that it is supposed naturally to lead the multitude to imagine the difference between persons thus named and others, to be greater than it is; yea, as though it were so great, that they must be, as it were, another species of beings. And they object against it as arising from an uncharitable, narrow, contracted spirit; which, they say, commonly inclines persons to confine all that is good to themselves, and their own party, and to make a wide distinction between themselves and others, and stigmatize those that differ from them, with odious names. They say, moreover, that the keeping up such a distinction of names has a direct tendency to uphold distance and disaffection, and keep alive mutual hatred among Christians, who ought all to be united in friendship and charity, however they cannot, in all things, think alike.*

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I confess these things are very plausible. And I will not deny, that there are some unhappy consequences of this distinction of names, and that men's infirmities and evil dispositions often make an ill improvement of it. But yet, I humbly conceive, these objections are carried far beyond reason. The generality of mankind are disposed enough, and a great deal too much, to uncharitableness, and to be censorious and bitter towards those that differ from them in religious opinions: Which evil temper of mind will take occasion to exert itself from many things in themselves, innocent, useful and necessary. But yet there is no necessity to suppose, that the thus distinguishing persons of different opinions by different names, arises mainly from an uncharitable spirit. It may arise from the disposition there is in mankind (whom God has distinguished with an ability and inclination for speech) to improve the benefit of language, in the proper use and design of names, given to things which they have often occasion to speak of, or signify their minds about; which is to enable them to express their ideas with ease and expedition, without being encumbered with an obscure and difficult circumlocution. And the thus distinguishing persons of different opinions in religious matters may not imply nor infer, any more than that there is a difference, and that the difference is such as we find we have often occasion to take notice of, and make mention of. That which we have frequent occasion to speak of, (whatever it be, that gives the occasion) this wants a name; and it is always a defect in language, in such cases, to be obliged to make use of a description, instead of a name. Thus we have often occasion to speak of those who are the descendants of the ancient inhabitants of France, who were subjects or heads of the government of that land, and spake the language peculiar to it; in distinction from the descendants of the inhabitants of Spain, who belonged to that community, and spake the language of that country. And therefore we find the great need of distinct names to signify these different sorts of people, and the great convenience of those distinguishing words, French *and* Spaniards; *by which the signification of our minds is quick and easy, and our speech is delivered from the burden of a continual reiteration of diffuse descriptions, with which it must otherwise be embarrassed.*

That the difference of the opinions of those who, in their general scheme of divinity, agree with these two noted men, Calvin and Arminius, is a thing there is often occasion to speak of, is what the practice of the latter itself confesses; who are often, in their discourses and writings, taking notice of the supposed absurd and pernicious opinions of the former sort. And therefore the making use of different names in this case cannot reasonably be objected against, or condemned, as a thing which must come

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from so bad a cause as they assign. It is easy to be accounted for, without supposing it to arise from any other source, than the existence and natural tendency of the state of things; considering the faculty and disposition God has given to mankind, to express things which they have frequent occasion to mention, by certain distinguishing names. It is an effect that is similar to what we see arise, in innumerable cases which are parallel, where the cause is not at all blameworthy.

Nevertheless, at first, I had thoughts of carefully avoiding the use of the appellation, Arminian, *in this treatise: But I soon found I should be put to great difficulty by it; and that my discourse would be so encumbered with an often repeated circumlocution, instead of a name, which would express the thing intended as well and better, that I altered my purpose. And therefore I must ask the excuse of such as are apt to be offended with things of this nature, that I have so freely used the term* Arminian *in the following discourse. I profess it to be without any design, to stigmatize persons of any sort with a name of reproach, or at all to make them appear more odious. If, when I had occasion to speak of those Divines who are commonly called by this name, I had, instead of styling them* Arminians, *called them* these men, *as Dr. Whitby does* Calvinistic *Divines; it probably would not have been taken any better, or thought to shew a better temper, or more good manners. I have done as I would be done by, in this matter. However the term* Calvinistic *is, in these days, among most, a term of greater reproach than the term* Arminian; *yet I should not take it at all amiss, to be called a* Calvinist, *for distinction's sake: Though I utterly disclaim a dependence on Calvin, or believing the doctrines which I hold, because he believed and taught them; and cannot justly be charged with believing in every thing just as he taught.*

But, lest I should really be an occasion of injury to some persons, I would here give notice, that though I generally speak of that doctrine, concerning Free Will and moral Agency, which I oppose, as an Arminian *doctrine; yet I would not be understood, as asserting that every Divine or Author, whom I have occasion to mention, as maintaining that doctrine, was properly an* Arminian, *or one of that sort which is commonly called by that name. Some of them went far beyond the* Arminians; *and I would by no means charge* Arminians *in general with all the corrupt doctrine, which these maintained. Thus, for instance, it would be very injurious, if I should rank* Arminian *Divines, in general, with such Authors as Mr. Chubb. I doubt not, many of them have some of his doctrines in abhorrence; though he agrees for the most part, with* Arminians, *in his notion of the Freedom of the Will. And, on the other hand, though I suppose this notion to be*

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a leading article in the Arminian *scheme, that which, if pursued in its consequences, will truly infer, or naturally lead to all the rest; yet I do not charge all that have held this doctrine, with being* Arminians. *For whatever may be the consequences of the doctrine really, yet some that hold this doctrine, may not own nor see these consequences; and it would be unjust, in many instances, to charge every Author with believing and maintaining all the real consequences of his avowed doctrines. And I desire it may be particularly noted, that though I have occasion, in the following discourse, often to mention the Author of the book, entitled,* An Essay on the Freedom of the Will, in God and the Creature, *as holding that notion of Freedom of Will, which I oppose; yet I do not mean to call him an* Arminian: *However, in that doctrine he agrees with* Arminians, *and departs from the current and general opinion of* Calvinists. *If the Author of that Essay be the same as it is commonly ascribed to, he, doubtless, was not one that ought to bear that name. But however good a divine he was in many respects, yet that particular* Arminian *doctrine which he maintained, is never the better for being held by such an one; nor is there less need of opposing it on that account; but rather is there the more need of it; as it will be likely to have the more pernicious influence, for being taught by a divine of his name and character; supposing the doctrine to be wrong, and in itself to be of an ill tendency.*

I have nothing further to say by way of preface; but only to bespeak the Reader's candor, and calm attention to what I have written. The subject is of such importance, as to demand *attention, and the most thorough consideration. Of all kinds of knowledge that we can ever obtain, the knowledge of God, and the knowledge of ourselves, are the most important. As religion is the great business, for which we are created, and on which our happiness depends; and as religion consists in an intercourse between ourselves and our Maker; and so has its foundation in God's nature and ours, and in the relation that God and we stand in to each other; therefore a true knowledge of both must be needful, in order to true religion. But the knowledge of ourselves consists chiefly in right apprehensions concerning those two chief faculties of our nature, the* Understanding *and* Will. *Both are very important: Yet the science of the latter must be confessed to be of greatest moment; inasmuch as all virtue and religion have their seat more immediately in the Will, consisting more especially in right acts and habits of this faculty.*

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FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

PART I.

Wherein are explained and stated various Terms *and* Things *belonging to the Subject of the ensuing Discourse.*

SECTION I.

Concerning the Nature of the Will.

It may possibly be thought, that there is no great need of going about to define or describe the Will; this word being generally as well understood as any other words we can use to explain it: And so perhaps it would be, had not philosophers, metaphysicians and polemic divines brought the matter into obscurity by the things they have said of it. But since it is so, I think it may be of some use, and will tend to the greater clearness in the following discourse, to say a few things concerning it.

And therefore I observe, that the Will (without any metaphysical refining) is plainly, That by which the mind chooses any thing. The faculty of the Will is that faculty or power or principle of mind by which it is capable of choosing: An act of the Will is the same as an act of choosing or choice.

If any think it is a more perfect definition of the Will, to say, that it is that by which the soul either chooses or refuses; I am content with it: Though I think that it is enough to say, it is that by which the soul chooses: For in every act of Will whatsoever, the mind chooses one thing rather than another; it chooses something rather than the contrary, or

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rather than the want or nonexistence of that thing. So in every act of refusal, the mind chooses the absence of the thing refused; the positive and the negative are set before the mind for its choice, and it chooses the negative; and the mind's making its choice in that case is properly the act of the Will; the Will's determining between the two is a voluntary determining; but that is the same thing as making a choice. So that whatever names we call the act of the Will by, choosing, refusing, approving, disapproving, liking, disliking, embracing, rejecting, determining, directing, commanding, forbidding, declining or being averse, a being pleased or displeased with; all may be reduced to this of choosing. For the soul to act voluntarily, is evermore to act electively.

Mr. Locke* says, "The Will signifies nothing but a power or ability to prefer or choose." And in the foregoing page says, "The word preferring seems best to express the act of volition;" but adds, that "it does it not precisely; for (says he) though a man would prefer flying to walking, yet who can say he ever wills it?" But the instance he mentions does not prove that there is any thing else in willing, but merely preferring: For it should be considered what is the next and immediate object of the Will, with respect to a man's walking, or any other external action; which is not being removed from one place to another; on the earth, or through the air; these are remoter objects of preference; but such or such an immediate exertion of himself. The thing nextly chosen or preferred when a man wills to walk, is not his being removed to such a place where he would be, but such an exertion and motion of his legs and feet, &c. in order to it. And his willing such an alteration in his body in the present moment, is nothing else but his choosing or preferring such an alteration in his body at such a moment, or his liking it better than the forbearance of it. And God has so made and established the human nature, the soul being united to a body in proper state, that the soul preferring or choosing such an immediate exertion or alteration of the body, such an altera-

* Human Understanding. Edit. 7. vol. i. p. 197.

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tion instantaneously follows. There is nothing else in the actions of my mind, that I am conscious of while I walk, but only my preferring or choosing, through successive moments, that there should be such alterations of my external sensations and motions; together with a concurring habitual expectation that it will be so; having ever found by experience, that on such an immediate preference, such sensations and motions do actually, instantaneously, and constantly arise. But it is not so in the case of flying: Though a man may be said remotely to choose or prefer flying; yet he does not choose or prefer, incline to or desire, under circumstances in view, any immediate exertion of the members of his body in order to it; because he has no expectation that he should obtain the desired end by any such exertion; and he does not prefer or incline to any bodily exertion or effort under this apprehended circumstance, of its being wholly in vain. So that if we carefully distinguish the proper objects of the several acts of the Will, it will not appear by this, and such like instances, that there is any difference between volition and preference; or that a man's choosing, liking best, or being best pleased with a thing, are not the same with his willing that thing; as they seem to be according to those general and more natural notions of men, according to which language is formed. Thus an act of the Will is commonly expressed by its pleasing a man to do thus or thus; and a man's doing as he wills, and doing as he pleases, are the same thing in common speech.

Mr. Locke* says, "The Will is perfectly distinguished from Desire; which in the very same action may have a quite contrary tendency from that which our Wills set us upon. A man (says he) whom I cannot deny, may oblige me to use persuasions to another, which, at the same time I am speaking, I may wish may not prevail on him. In this case it is plain the Will and Desire run counter." I do not suppose, that Will and Desire are words of precisely the same signification: Will seems to be a word of a more general

* Human Understanding, vol. i. p. 203, 204.

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signification, extending to things present and absent. Desire respects something absent. I may prefer my present situation and posture, suppose, sitting still, or having my eyes open, and so may will it. But yet I cannot think they are so entirely distinct, that they can ever be properly said to run counter. A man never, in any instance, wills any thing contrary to his desires, or desires any thing contrary to his Will. The forementioned instance, which Mr. Locke produces, does not prove that he ever does. He may, on some consideration or other, will to utter speeches which have a tendency to persuade another, and still may desire that they may not persuade him: But yet his Will and Desire do not run counter. The thing which he wills, the very same he desires; and he does not will a thing, and desire the contrary in any particular. In this instance, it is not carefully observed, what is the thing willed, and what is the thing desired: If it were, it would be found that Will and Desire do not clash in the least. The thing willed on some consideration, is to utter such words; and certainly, the same consideration, so influences him, that he does not desire the contrary: All things considered, he chooses to utter such words, and does not desire not to utter them. And so as to the thing which Mr. Locke speaks of as desired, viz. That the words, though they tend to persuade, should not be effectual to that end, his Will is not contrary to this; he does not will that they should be effectual, but rather wills that they should not, as he desires. In order to prove that the Will and Desire may run counter, it should be shown that they may be contrary one to the other in the same thing, or with respect to the very same object of Will or Desire: But here the objects are two; and in each, taken by themselves, the Will and Desire agree. And it is no wonder that they should not agree in different things, however little distinguished they are in their nature. The Will may not agree with the Will, nor Desire agree with Desire, in different things. As in this very instance which Mr. Locke mentions, a person may, on some consideration, desire to use persuasions, and at the same time may desire they may not prevail; but yet nobody will say, that De-

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sire runs counter to Desire; or that this proves that Desire is perfectly a distinct thing from Desire....The like might be observed of the other instance Mr. Locke produces, of a man's desiring to be eased of pain, &c.

But not to dwell any longer on this, whether *Desire* and *Will*, and whether *Preference* and *Volition* be precisely the same things or no; yet, I trust it will be allowed by all, that in every act of Will there is an act of choice; that in every volition there is a preference, or a prevailing inclination of the soul, whereby the soul, at that instant, is out of a state of perfect indifference, with respect to the direct object of the volition. So that in every act, or going forth of the Will, there is some preponderation of the mind or inclination, one way rather than another; and the soul had rather *have* or *do* one thing than another, or than not have or do that thing; and that there, where there is absolutely no preferring or choosing, but a perfect continuing equilibrium, there is no volition.

SECTION II.

Concerning the Determination of the WILL.

BY *determining the Will*, if the phrase be used with any meaning, must be intended, causing that the act of the Will or choice should be thus, and not otherwise: And the Will is said to be determined, when, in consequence of some action or influence, its choice is directed to, and fixed upon a particular object. As when we speak of the determination of motion, we mean causing the motion of the body to be such a way, or in such a direction, rather than another.

To talk of the determination of the Will, supposes an effect, which must have a cause. If the Will be determined, there is a determiner. This must be supposed to be intended even by them that say, the Will determines itself. If it be so, the Will is both determiner and determined; it is a

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cause that acts and produces effects upon itself, and is the object of its own influence and action.

With respect to that grand enquiry, What determines the Will, it would be very tedious and unnecessary at present to enumerate and examine all the various opinions which have been advanced concerning this matter; nor is it needful that I should enter into a particular disquisition of all points debated in disputes on that question, whether the Will always follows the last dictate of the understanding. It is sufficient to my present purpose to say, it is that motive, which, as it stands in the view of the mind, is the strongest, that determines the Will. But it may be necessary that I should a little explain my meaning in this.

By *motive*, I mean the whole of that which moves, excites or invites the mind to volition, whether that be one thing singly, or many things conjunctly. Many particular things may concur and unite their strength to induce the mind; and, when it is so, all together are as it were one complex motive. And when I speak of the *strongest motive*, I have respect to the strength of the whole that operates to induce to a particular act of volition, whether that be the strength of one thing alone, or of many together.

Whatever is a motive, in this sense, must be something that is extant in the view or apprehension of the understanding, or perceiving faculty. Nothing can induce or invite the mind to will or act any thing, any further than it is perceived, or is some way or other in the mind's view; for what is wholly unperceived, and perfectly out of the mind's view, cannot affect the mind at all. It is most evident, that nothing is in the mind, or reaches it, or takes any hold of it, any otherwise than as it is perceived or thought of.

And I think it must also be allowed by all, that every thing that is properly called a motive, excitement or inducement to a perceiving, willing agent, has some sort and degree of *tendency* or *advantage* to move or excite the Will, previous to the effect, or to the act of the Will excited. This previous tendency of the motive is what I call the strength of the motive. That motive which has a less degree of previous ad-

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vantage or tendency to move the Will, or that appears less inviting, as it stands in the view of the mind, is what I call a *weaker motive*. On the contrary, that which appears most inviting, and has, by what appears concerning it to the understanding or apprehension, the greatest degree of previous tendency to excite and induce the choice, is what I call the *strongest motive*. And in this sense, I suppose the Will is always determined by the strongest motive.

Things that exist in the view of the mind have their strength, tendency or advantage to move or excite its Will, from many things appertaining to the nature and circumstances of the thing viewed, the nature and circumstances of the mind that views, and the degree and manner of its view; of which it would perhaps be hard to make a perfect enumeration. But so much I think may be determined in general, without room for controversy, that whatever is perceived or apprehended by an intelligent and voluntary agent, which has the nature and influence of a motive to volition or choice, is considered or viewed as good; nor has it any tendency to invite or engage the election of the soul in any further degree than it appears such. For to say otherwise, would be to say, that things that appear have a tendency by the appearance they make, to engage the mind to elect them, some other way than by their appearing eligible to it; which is absurd. And therefore it must be true, in some sense, that the Will always is as the greatest apparent good is. For the right understanding of this, two things must be well and distinctly observed.

1. It must be observed in what sense I use the term *good*; namely, as of the same import with *agreeable*. To appear good to the mind, as I use the phrase, is the same as to *appear agreeable*, or *seem pleasing* to the mind. Certainly nothing appears inviting and eligible to the mind, or tending to engage its inclination and choice, considered as evil or disagreeable; nor, indeed, as indifferent, and neither agreeable nor disagreeable. But if it tends to draw the inclination, and move the Will, it must be under the notion of that which suits the mind. And therefore that must have the greatest

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tendency to attract and engage it, which, as it stands in the mind's view, suits it best, and pleases it most; and in that sense, is the greatest apparent good: To say otherwise, is little, if any thing, short of a direct and plain contradiction.

The word *good*, in this sense, includes in its signification, the removal or avoiding of evil, or of that which is disagreeable and uneasy. It is agreeable and pleasing to avoid what is disagreeable and displeasing, and to have uneasiness removed. So that here is included what Mr. Locke supposes determines the Will. For when he speaks of uneasiness as determining the Will, he must be understood as supposing that the end or aim which governs in the volition or act of preference, is the avoiding or removal of that uneasiness; and that is the same thing as choosing and seeking what is more easy and agreeable.

2. When I say, the Will is as the greatest apparent good is, or, (as I have explained it) that volition has always for its object the thing which appears most agreeable; it must be carefully observed, to avoid confusion and needless objection, that I speak of the *direct* and *immediate* object of the act of volition; and not some object that the act of Will has not an immediate, but only an indirect and remote respect to. Many acts of volition have some remote relation to an object, that is different from the thing most immediately willed and chosen. Thus, when a drunkard has his liquor before him, and he has to choose whether to drink it or no; the proper and immediate objects, about which his present volition is conversant, and between which his choice now decides, are his own acts, in drinking the liquor, or letting it alone; and this will certainly be done according to what, in the present view of his mind, taken in the whole of it, is most agreeable to him. If he chooses or wills to drink it, and not to let it alone; then this action, as it stands in the view of his mind, with all that belongs to its appearance there, is more agreeable and pleasing than letting it alone.

But the objects to which this act of volition may relate more remotely, and between which his choice may determine more indirectly, are the present pleasure the man expects by

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drinking, and the future misery which he judges will be the consequence of it: He may judge that this future misery when it comes, will be more disagreeable and unpleasant, than refraining from drinking now would be. But these two things are not the proper objects that the act of volition spoken of is nextly conversant about. For the act of Will spoken of is concerning present drinking or forbearing to drink. If he wills to drink, then drinking is the proper object of the act of his Will; and drinking, on some account or other, now appears most agreeable to him, and suits him best. If he chooses to refrain, then refraining is the immediate object of his Will, and is most pleasing to him. If in the choice he makes in the case, he prefers a present pleasure to a future advantage, which he judges will be greater when it comes; then a lesser present pleasure appears more agreeable to him than a greater advantage at a distance. If, on the contrary, a future advantage is preferred, then that appears most agreeable, and suits him best. And so still the present volition is as the greatest apparent good at present is.

I have rather chosen to express myself thus, that the Will always is as the greatest apparent good, or, as what appears most agreeable, is, than to say that the Will is determined by the greatest apparent good, or by what seems most agreeable; because an appearing most agreeable or pleasing to the mind, and the mind's preferring and choosing, seem hardly to be properly and perfectly distinct. If strict propriety of speech be insisted on, it may more properly be said, that the voluntary action which is the immediate consequence and fruit of the mind's volition or choice, is determined by that which appears most agreeable, than that the preference or choice itself is; but that the act of volition itself is always determined by that in or about the mind's view of the object, which causes it to appear most agreeable. I say, in or about the mind's view of the object, because what has influence to render an object in view agreeable, is not only what appears in the object viewed, but also the manner of the view, and the state and circumstances of the mind that views. Particularly to enumerate all things pertaining to the mind's

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view of the objects of volition, which have influence in their appearing agreeable to the mind, would be a matter of no small difficulty, and might require a treatise by itself, and is not necessary to my present purpose. I shall therefore only mention some things in general.

I. One thing that makes an object proposed to choice agreeable, is the apparent nature and circumstances of the object. And there are various things of this sort, that have an hand in rendering the object more or less agreeable; as,

1. That which appears in the object, which renders it beautiful and pleasant, or deformed and irksome to the mind; viewing it as it is in itself.

2. The apparent degree of pleasure or trouble attending the object, or the consequence of it. Such concomitants and consequents being viewed as circumstances of the object, are to be considered as belonging to it, and as it were parts of it; as it stands in the mind's view, as a proposed object of choice.

3. The apparent state of the pleasure or trouble that appears, with respect to distance of time; being either nearer or farther off. It is a thing in itself agreeable to the mind, to have pleasure speedily; and disagreeable to have it delayed; so that if there be two equal degrees of pleasure set in the mind's view, and all other things are equal, but only one is beheld as near, and the other far off; the nearer will appear most agreeable, and so will be chosen. Because though the agreeableness of the objects be exactly equal, as viewed in themselves, yet not as viewed in their circumstances; one of them having the additional agreeableness of the circumstance of nearness.

II. Another thing that contributes to the agreeableness of an object of choice, as it stands in the mind's view, is the manner of the view. If the object be something which appears connected with future pleasure, not only will the degree of apparent pleasure have influence, but also the manner of the view, especially in two respects.

1. With respect to the degree of judgment, or firmness of assent, with which the mind judges the pleasure to be future. Because it is more agreeable to have a certain happi-

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ness, than an uncertain one; and a pleasure viewed as more probable, all other things being equal, is more agreeable to the mind, than that which is viewed as less probable.

2. With respect to the degree of the idea of the future pleasure. With regard to things which are the subject of our thoughts, either past, present, or future, we have much more of an idea or apprehension of some things than others; that is, our idea is much more clear, lively and strong. Thus the ideas we have of sensible things by immediate sensation, are usually much more lively than those we have by mere imagination, or by contemplation of them when absent. My idea of the sun, when I look upon it, is more vivid than when I only think of it. Our idea of the sweet relish of a delicious fruit, is usually stronger when we taste it, than when we only imagine it. And sometimes the ideas we have of things by contemplation, are much stronger and clearer, than at other times. Thus, a man at one time has a much stronger idea of the pleasure which is to be enjoyed in eating some sort of food that he loves, than at another. Now the degree, or strength of the idea or sense that men have of future good or evil, is one thing that has great influence on their minds to excite choice or volition. When of two kinds of future pleasure, which the mind considers of, and are presented for choice, both are supposed exactly equal by the judgment, and both equally certain, and all other things are equal, but only one of them is what the mind has a far more lively sense of, than of the other; this has the greatest advantage by far to affect and attract the mind, and move the Will. It is now more agreeable to the mind, to take the pleasure it has a strong and lively sense of, than that which it has only a faint idea of. The view of the former is attended with the strongest appetite, and the greatest uneasiness attends the want of it; and it is agreeable to the mind to have uneasiness removed, and its appetite gratified. And if several future enjoyments are presented together, as competitors for the choice of the mind, some of them judged to be greater, and others less; the mind also having a greater sense and more lively idea of the good of some of them, and of others a

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less; and some are viewed as of greater certainty or probability than others; and those enjoyments that appear most agreeable in one of these respects, appear least so in others: In this case, all other things being equal, the agreeableness of a proposed object of choice will be in a degree some way compounded of the degree of good supposed by the judgment, the degree of apparent probability or certainty of that good, and the degree of the view or sense, or liveliness of the idea the mind has of that good; because all together concur to constitute the degree in which the object appears at present agreeable; and accordingly volition will be determined.

I might further observe, the state of the mind that views a proposed object of choice, is another thing that contributes to the agreeableness or disagreeableness of that object; the particular temper which the mind has by nature, or that has been introduced and established by education, example, custom, or some other means; or the frame or state that the mind is in on a particular occasion. That object which appears agreeable to one, does not so to another. And the same object does not always appear alike agreeable, to the same person, at different times. It is most agreeable to some men, to follow their reason; and to others, to follow their appetites: To some men it is more agreeable to deny a vicious inclination, than to gratify it; others it suits best to gratify the vilest appetites. It is more disagreeable to some men than others, to counteract a former resolution. In these respects, and many others which might be mentioned, different things will be most agreeable to different persons; and not only so, but to the same persons at different times.

But possibly it is needless and improper, to mention the frame and state of the mind, as a distinct ground of the agreeableness of objects from the other two mentioned before, viz. The apparent nature and circumstances of the objects viewed, and the manner of the view; perhaps if we strictly consider the matter, the different temper and state of the mind makes no alteration as to the agreeableness of objects, any other way than as it makes the objects themselves appear differently beautiful or deformed, having apparent pleasure or pain

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attending them; and as it occasions the manner of the view to be different, causes the idea of beauty or deformity, pleasure or uneasiness to be more or less lively.

However, I think so much is certain, that volition, in no one instance that can be mentioned, is otherwise than the greatest apparent good is, in the manner which has been explained. The choice of the mind never departs from that which at that time, and with respect to the direct and immediate objects of that decision of the mind, appears most agreeable and pleasing, all things considered. If the immediate objects of the Will are a man's own actions, then those actions which appear most agreeable to him he wills. If it be now most agreeable to him, all things considered, to walk, then he wills to walk. If it be now, upon the whole of what at present appears to him, most agreeable to speak, then he chooses to speak: If it suits him best to keep silence, then he chooses to keep silence. There is scarcely a plainer and more universal dictate of the sense and experience of mankind, than, that, when men act voluntarily, and do what they please, then they do what suits them best, or what is most agreeable to them. To say, that they do what they please, or what pleases them, but yet do not do what is agreeable to them, is the same thing as to say, they do what they please, but do not act their pleasure; and that is to say, that they do what they please, and yet do not do what they please.

It appears from these things, that in some sense, the Will always follows the last dictate of the understanding. But then the understanding must be taken in a large sense, as including the whole faculty of perception or apprehension, and not merely what is called reason or judgment. If by the dictate of the understanding is meant what reason declares to be best or most for the person's happiness, taking in the whole of his duration, it is not true, that the Will always follows the last dictate of the understanding. Such a dictate of reason is quite a different matter from things appearing now most agreeable; all things being put together which pertain to the mind's present perceptions, apprehensions or ideas, in any respect. Although that dictate of reason, when it takes place,

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is one thing that is put into the scales, and is to be considered as a thing that has concern in the compound influence which moves and induces the Will; and is one thing that is to be considered in estimating the degree of that appearance of good which the Will always follows; either as having its influence added to other things, or subducted from them. When it concurs with other things, then its weight is added to them, as put into the same scale; but when it is against them, it is as a weight in the opposite scale, where it resists the influence of other things: Yet its resistance is often overcome by their greater weight, and so the act of the Will is determined in opposition to it.

The things which I have said, may, I hope, serve in some measure, to illustrate and confirm the position I laid down in the beginning of this section, viz. That the Will is always determined by the strongest motive, or by that view of the mind which has the greatest degree of previous tendency to excite volition. But whether I have been so happy as rightly to explain the thing wherein consists the strength of motives, or not, yet my failing in this will not overthrow the position itself; which carries much of its own evidence with it, and is the thing of chief importance to the purpose of the ensuing discourse: And the truth of it, I hope, will appear with great clearness, before I have finished what I have to say on the subject of human liberty.

SECTION III.

Concerning the Meaning of the Terms Necessity, Impossibility, Inability, &c. *and of* Contingence.

THE words necessary, impossible, &c. are abundantly used in controversies about Free Will and moral agency; and therefore the sense in which they are used, should be clearly understood.

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Here I might say, that a thing is then said to be necessary, when it must be, and cannot be otherwise. But this would not properly be a definition of Necessity, or an explanation of the word, any more than if I explained the word *must*, by there being a necessity. The words *must*, *can*, and *cannot*, need explication as much as the words *necessary* and *impossible*; excepting that the former are words that children commonly use, and know something of the meaning of earlier than the latter.

The word *necessary*, as used in common speech, is a relative term; and relates to some supposed opposition made to the existence of the thing spoken of, which is overcome, or proves in vain to hinder or alter it. That is necessary, in the original and proper sense of the word, which is, or will be, notwithstanding all supposable opposition. To say, that a thing is necessary, is the same thing as to say, that it is impossible it should not be: But the word *impossible* is manifestly a relative term, and has reference to supposed power exerted to bring a thing to pass, which is insufficient for the effect; as the word *unable* is relative, and has relation to ability or endeavor which is insufficient; and as the word *irresistible* is relative, and has always reference to resistance which is made, or may be made to some force or power tending to an effect, and is insufficient to withstand the power or hinder the effect. The common notion of necessity and impossibility implies something that frustrates endeavor or desire.

Here several things are to be noted.

1. Things are said to be necessary in general, which are or will be notwithstanding any supposable opposition from us or others, or from whatever quarter. But things are said to be necessary to us, which are or will be notwithstanding all opposition supposable in the case from us. The same may be observed of the word *impossible*, and other such like terms.

2. These terms *necessary*, *impossible*, *irresistible*, &c. do especially belong to the controversy about liberty and moral agency, as used in the latter of the two senses now mentioned, viz. as necessary or impossible to us, and with relation to any supposable opposition or endeavour of ours.

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3. As the word *Necessity* in its vulgar and common use, is relative, and has always reference to some supposable insufficient opposition; so when we speak of any thing as necessary to us, it is with relation to some supposable opposition of our Wills, or some voluntary exertion or effort of ours to the contrary: For we do not properly make opposition to an event, any otherwise than as we voluntarily oppose it. Things are said to be what must be, or necessarily are, as to us, when they are, or will be, though we desire or endeavor the contrary, or try to prevent or remove their existence: But such opposition of ours always either consists in, or implies, opposition of our Wills.

It is manifest that all such like words and phrases, as vulgarly used, are used and accepted in this manner. A thing is said to be necessary, when we cannot help it, let us do what we will. So any thing is said to be impossible to us, when we would do it, or would have it brought to pass, and endeavor it; or at least may be supposed to desire and seek it; but all our desires and endeavors are, or would be vain. And that is said to be irresistible, which overcomes all our opposition, resistance, and endeavors to the contrary. And we are said to be unable to do a thing, when our supposable desires and endeavors to do it are insufficient.

We are accustomed, in the common use of language, to apply and understand these phrases in this sense: We grow up with such a habit; which by the daily use of these terms, in such a sense, from our childhood, becomes fixed and settled; so that the idea of a relation to a supposed will, desire and endeavor of ours, is strongly connected with these terms, and naturally excited in our minds, whenever we hear the words used. Such ideas, and these words, are so united and associated, that they unavoidably go together; one suggests the other, and carries the other with it, and never can be separated as long as we live. And if we use the words, as terms of art, in another sense, yet, unless we are exceeding circumspect and wary, we shall insensibly slide into the vulgar use of them, and so apply the words in a very inconsistent manner: This habitual connexion of ideas will deceive and con-

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found us in our reasonings and discourses, wherein we pretend to use these terms in that manner, as terms of art.

4. It follows from what has been observed, that when these terms *necessary*, *impossible*, *irresistible*, *unable*, &c. are used in cases wherein no opposition, or insufficient will or endeavor, is supposed, or can be supposed, but the very nature of the supposed case itself excludes and denies any such opposition, will or endeavor, these terms are then not used in their proper signification, but quite beside their use in common speech. The reason is manifest; namely, that in such cases we cannot use the words with reference to a supposable opposition, will or endeavor. And therefore if any man uses these terms in such cases, he either uses them nonsensically, or in some new sense, diverse from their original and proper meaning. As for instance; if a man should affirm after this manner, that it is necessary for a man, and what must be, that a man should choose virtue rather than vice, during the time that he prefers virtue to vice; and that it is a thing impossible and irresistible, that it should be otherwise than that he should have this choice, so long as this choice continues; such a man would use the terms *must*, *irresistible*, &c. with perfect insignificance and nonsense; or in some new sense, diverse from their common use; which is with reference, as has been observed, to supposable opposition, unwillingness and resistance; whereas, here, the very supposition excludes and denies any such thing: For the case supposed is that of being willing and choosing.

5. It appears from what has been said, that these terms *necessary*, *impossible*, &c. are often used by philosophers and metaphysicians in a sense quite diverse from their common use and original signification: For they apply them to many cases in which no opposition is supposed or supposable. Thus they use them with respect to God's existence before the creation of the world, when there was no other being but He: So with regard to many of the dispositions and acts of the Divine Beings, such as his loving himself, his loving righteousness, hating sin, &c. So they apply these terms to many cases of the inclinations and actions of created intelligent beings, angels

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and men; wherein all opposition of the Will is shut out and denied, in the very supposition of the case.

Metaphysical or Philosophical Necessity is nothing different from their certainty. I speak not now of the certainty of knowledge, but the certainty that is in things themselves, which is the foundation of the certainty of the knowledge of them; or that wherein lies the ground of the infallibility of the proposition which affirms them.

What is sometimes given as the definition of philosophical Necessity, namely, That by which a thing cannot but be, or whereby it cannot be otherwise, fails of being a proper explanation of it, on two accounts: First, the words *can*, or *cannot*, need explanation as much as the word *Necessity*; and the former may as well be explained by the latter, as the latter by the former. Thus, if any one asked us what we mean, when we say, a thing cannot but be, we might explain ourselves by saying, we mean, it must necessarily be so; as well as explain Necessity, by saying, it is that by which a thing cannot but be. And Secondly, this definition is liable to the forementioned great inconvenience: The words *cannot*, or *unable*, are properly relative, and have relation to power exerted, or that may be exerted, in order to the thing spoken of; to which, as I have now observed, the word *Necessity*, as used by philosophers, has no reference.

Philosophical Necessity is really nothing else than the full and fixed connexion between the things signified by the subject and predicate of a proposition, which affirms something to be true. When there is such a connexion, then the thing affirmed in the proposition is necessary, in a philosophical sense; whether any opposition, or contrary effort be supposed, or supposable in the case, or no. When the subject and predicate of the proposition, which affirms the existence of any thing, either substance, quality, act or circumstance, have a full and certain connexion, then the existence or being of that thing is said to be necessary in a metaphysical sense. And in this sense I use the word *Necessity*, in the following discourse, when I endeavor to prove that Necessity is not inconsistent with liberty.

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The subject and predicate of a proposition, which affirm existence of something, may have a full, fixed, and certain connexion several ways.

(1.) They may have a full and perfect connexion in and of themselves; because it may imply a contradiction, or gross absurdity, to suppose them not connected. Thus many things are necessary in their own nature. So the eternal existence of being generally considered, is necessary in itself: Because it would be in itself the greatest absurdity, to deny the existence of being in general, or to say there was absolute and universal nothing; and is as it were the sum of all contradictions; as might be shewn, if this were a proper place for it. So God's infinity, and other attributes are necessary. So it is necessary in its own nature, that two and two should be four; and it is necessary, that all right lines drawn from the centre of a circle to the circumference should be equal. It is necessary, fit and suitable, that men should do to others, as they would that they should do to them. So innumerable metaphysical and mathematical truths are necessary in themselves; the subject and predicate of the proposition which affirms them, are perfectly connected of themselves.

(2.) The connexion of the subject and predicate of a proposition, which affirms the existence of something, may be fixed and made certain, because the existence of that thing is already come to pass; and either now is, or has been; and so has as it were made sure of existence. And therefore, the proposition which affirms present and past existence of it, may by this means be made certain, and necessarily and unalterably true. The past event has fixed and decided the matter, as to its existence; and has made it impossible but that existence should be truly predicated of it. Thus the existence of whatever is already come to pass, is now become necessary; it is become impossible it should be otherwise than true, that such a thing has been.

(3.) The subject and predicate of a proposition which affirms something to be, may have a real and certain connexion consequentially; and so the existence of the thing may be consequentially necessary; as it may be surely and firmly con-

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nected with something else, that is necessary in one of the former respects. As it is either fully and thoroughly connected with that which is absolutely necessary in its own nature, or with something which has already received and made sure of existence. This Necessity lies in, or may be explained by the connexion of two or more propositions one with another. Things which are perfectly connected with other things that are necessary, are necessary themselves, by a Necessity of consequence.

And here it may be observed, that all things which are future, or which will hereafter begin to be, which can be said to be necessary, are necessary only in this last way. Their existence is not necessary in itself; for if so, they always would have existed. Nor is their existence become nesessary by being made sure, by being already come to pass. Therefore, the only way that any thing that is to come to pass hereafter, is or can be necessary, is by a connexion with something that is necessary in its own nature, or something that already is, or has been; so that the one being supposed, the other certainly follows. And this also is the only way that all things past, excepting those which were from eternity, could be necessary before they came to pass, or could come to pass necessarily; and therefore the only way in which any effect or event, or any thing whatsoever that ever has had, or will have a beginning, has come into being necessarily, or will hereafter necessarily exist. And therefore this is the Necessity which especially belongs to controversies about the acts of the Will.

It may be of some use in these controversies, further to observe concerning metaphysical Necessity, that (agreeable to the distinction before observed of Necessity, as vulgarly understood) things that exist may be said to be necessary, either with a general or particular Necessity. The existence of a thing may be said to be necessary with a general Necessity, when all things whatsoever being considered, there is a foundation for certainty of its existence; or when in the most general and universal view of things, the subject and

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predicate of the proposition, which affirms its existence, would appear with an infallible connexion.

An event, or the existence of a thing, may be said to be necessary with a particular necessity, or with regard to a particular person, thing, or time, when nothing that can be taken into consideration, in or about that person, thing, or time, alters the case at all, as to the certainty of that event, or the existence of that thing; or can be of any account at all, in determining the infallibility of the connexion of the subject and predicate in the proposition which affirms the existence of the thing; so that it is all one, as to that person, or thing, at least at that time, as if the existence were necessary with a Necessity that is most universal and absolute. Thus there are many things that happen to particular persons, which they have no hand in, and in the existence of which no will of theirs has any concern, at least at that time; which, whether they are necessary or not, with regard to things in general, yet are necessary to them, and with regard to any volition of theirs at that time; as they prevent all acts of the will about the affair. I shall have occasion to apply this observation to particular instances in the following discourse. Whether the same things that are necessary with a particular Necessity, be not also necessary with a general Necessity, may be a matter of future consideration. Let that be as it will, it alters not the case, as to the use of this distinction of the kinds of Necessity.

These things may be sufficient for the explaining of the terms *necessary* and *necessity*, as terms of art, and as often used by metaphysicians, and controversial writers in divinity, in a sense diverse from, and more extensive than their original meaning in common language, which was before explained.

What has been said to shew the meaning of the terms *necessary* and *necessity*, may be sufficient for the explaining of the opposite terms *impossible* and *impossibility*. For there is no difference, but only the latter are negative, and the former positive. Impossibility is the same as negative Necessity, or a Necessity that a thing should not be. And it is

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used as a term of art in a like diversity from the original and vulgar meaning with Necessity.

The same may be observed concerning the words *unable* and *inability*. It has been observed, that these terms, in their original and common use, have relation to will and endeavor, as supposable in the case, and as insufficient for the bringing to pass the thing willed and endeavored. But as these terms are often used by philosophers and divines, especially writers on controversies about free will, they are used in a quite different, and far more extensive sense, and are applied to many cases wherein no will or endeavor for the bringing of the thing to pass, is or can be supposed, but is actually denied and excluded in the nature of the case.

As the words *necessary*, *impossible*, *unable*, &c. are used by polemic writers, in a sense diverse from their common signification, the like has happened to the term *contingent*. Any thing is said to be contingent, or to come to pass by chance or accident, in the original meaning of such words, when its connexion with its causes or antecedents, according to the established course of things, is not discerned; and so is what we have no means of the foresight of. And especially is any thing said to be contingent or accidental with regard to us, when any thing comes to pass that we are concerned in, as occasions or subjects, without our foreknowledge, and beside our design and scope.

But the word contingent is abundantly used in a very different sense; not for that whose connexion with the series of things we cannot discern, so as to foresee the event, but for something which has absolutely no previous ground or reason, with which its existence has any fixed and certain connexion.

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SECTION IV.

Of the Distinction of Natural *and* Moral Necessity, *and* Inability.

THAT Necessity which has been explained, consisting in an infallible connexion of the things signified by the subject and predicate of a proposition, as intelligent beings are the subjects of it, is distinguished into *moral* and *natural* Necessity.

I shall not now stand to inquire whether this distinction be a proper and perfect distinction; but shall only explain how these two sorts of Necessity are understood, as the terms are sometimes used, and as they are used in the following discourse.

The phrase, *moral* Necessity, is used variously; sometimes it is used for a Necessity of moral obligation. So we say, a man is under Necessity, when he is under bonds of duty and conscience, which he cannot be discharged from. So the word Necessity is often used for great obligation in point of interest. Sometimes by moral Necessity is meant that apparent connexion of things, which is the ground of moral evidence; and so is distinguished from absolute Necessity, or that sure connexion of things, that is a foundation for infallible certainty. In this sense, moral Necessity signifies much the same as that high degree of probability, which is ordinarily sufficient to satisfy, and be relied upon by mankind, in their conduct and behavior in the world, as they would consult their own safety and interest, and treat others properly as members of society. And sometimes by moral Necessity is meant that Necessity of connexion and consequence, which arises from such moral causes, as the strength of inclination, or motives, and the connexion which there is in many cases between these, and such certain volitions and actions. And it is in this sense, that I use the phrase, *moral Necessity*, in the following discourse.

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By natural Necessity, as applied to men, I mean such Necessity as men are under through the force of natural causes; as distinguished from what are called moral causes, such as habits and dispositions of the heart, and moral motives and inducements. Thus men placed in certain circumstances, are the subjects of particular sensations by Necessity; they feel pain when their bodies are wounded; they see the objects presented before them in a clear light, when their eyes are opened; so they assent to the truth of certain propositions, as soon as the terms are understood; as that two and two make four, that black is not white, that two parallel lines can never cross one another; so by a natural Necessity men's bodies move downwards, when there is nothing to support them.

But here several things may be noted concerning these two kinds of Necessity.

1. Moral Necessity may be as absolute, as natural Necessity. That is, the effect may be as perfectly connected with its moral cause, as a natural necessary effect is with its natural cause. Whether the Will in every case is necessarily determined by the strongest motive, or whether the Will ever makes any resistance to such a motive, or can ever oppose the strongest present inclination, or not; if that matter should be controverted, yet I suppose none will deny, but that, in some cases, a previous bias and inclination, or the motive presented, may be so powerful, that the act of the Will may be certainly and indissolubly connected therewith. When motives or previous biasses are very strong, all will allow that there is some *difficulty* in going against them. And if they were yet stronger, the difficulty would be still greater. And therefore, if more were still added to their strength, to a certain degree, it would make the difficulty so great, that it would be wholly *impossible* to surmount it; for this plain reason, because whatever power men may be supposed to have to surmount difficulties, yet that power is not infinite; and so goes not beyond certain limits. If a man can surmount ten degrees of difficulty of this kind with twenty degrees of strength, because the degrees of strength are beyond

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the degrees of difficulty; yet if the difficulty be increased to thirty, or an hundred, or a thousand degrees, and his strength not also increased, his strength will be wholly insufficient to surmount the difficulty. As therefore it must be allowed, that there may be such a thing as a sure and perfect connexion between moral causes and effects; so this only is what I call by the name of moral Necessity.

2. When I use this distinction of moral and natural Necessity, I would not be understood to suppose, that if any thing comes to pass by the former kind of Necessity, the nature of things is not concerned in it, as well as in the latter. I do not mean to determine, that when a moral habit or motive is so strong, that the act of the Will infallibly follows, this is not owing to the nature of things. But these are the names that these two kinds of Necessity have usually been called by; and they must be distinguished by some names or other; for there is a distinction or difference between them, that is very important in its consequences. Which difference does not lie so much in the nature of the connexion, as in the two terms connected. The cause with which the effect is connected, is of a particular kind, viz. that which is of moral nature; either some previous habitual disposition, or some motive exhibited to the understanding. And the effect is also of a particular kind; being likewise of a moral nature; consisting in some inclination or volition of the soul or voluntary action.

I suppose, that Necessity which is called natural, in distinction from moral necessity, is so called, because *mere nature*, as the word is vulgarly used, is concerned, without any thing of *choice*. The word nature is often used in opposition to choice; not because nature has indeed never any hand in our choice; but this probably comes to pass by means that we first get our notion of nature from that discernible and obvious course of events, which we observe in many things that our choice has no concern in; and especially in the material world; which, in very many parts of it, we easily perceive to be in a settled course; the stated order and manner of succession being very apparent. But where we do not readily

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discern the rule and connexion, (though there be a connexion, according to an established law, truly taking place) we signify the manner of event by some other name. Even in many things which are seen in the material and inanimate world, which do not discernibly and obviously come to pass according to any settled course, men do not call the manner of the event by the name of *nature*, but by such names as *accident*, *chance*, *contingence*, &c. So men make a distinction between nature and choice; as though they were completely and universally distinct. Whereas, I suppose none will deny but that choice, in many cases, arises from nature, as truly as other events. But the dependence and connexion between acts of volition or choice, and their causes, according to established laws, is not so sensible and obvious. And we observe that choice is as it were a new principle of motion and action, different from that established law and order of things which is most obvious, that is seen especially in corporeal and sensible things; and also the choice often interposes, interrupts and alters the chain of events in these external objects, and causes them to proceed otherwise than they would do, if let alone, and left to go on according to the laws of motion among themselves. Hence it is spoken of as if it were a principle of motion entirely distinct from nature, and properly set in opposition to it. Names being commonly given to things, according to what is most obvious, and is suggested by what appears to the senses without reflection and research.

3. It must be observed, that in what has been explained, as signified by the name of moral Necessity, the word Necessity is not used according to the original design and meaning of the word; for as was observed before, such terms, *necessary*, *impossible*, *irresistible*, &c. in common speech, and their most proper sense, are always relative; having reference to some supposable voluntary opposition or endeavor, that is insufficient. But no such opposition, or contrary will and endeavor, is supposable in the case of moral Necessity; which is a certainty of the inclination and will itself; which does not admit of the supposition of a will to oppose and resist it. For it is absurd to suppose the same individual will to oppose.

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itself, in its present act; or the present choice to be opposite to, and resisting present choice; as absurd as it is to talk of two contrary motions, in the same moving body, at the same time. And therefore the very case supposed never admits of any trial whether an opposing or resisting will can overcome this Necessity.

What has been said of natural and moral Necessity, may serve to explain what is intended by natural and moral *Inability*. We are said to be *naturally* unable to do a thing, when we cannot do it if we will, because what is most commonly called *nature* does not allow of it, or because of some impeding defect or obstacle that is extrinsic to the will, either in the faculty of understanding, constitution of body, or external objects. *Moral* Inability consists not in any of these things; but either in the want of inclination, or the strength of a contrary inclination, or the want of sufficient motives in view, to induce and excite the act of the will, or the strength of apparent motives to the contrary. Or both these may be resolved into one; and it may be said in one word, that moral Inability consists in the opposition or want of inclination. For when a person is unable to will or choose such a thing, through a defect of motives, or prevalence of contrary motives, it is the same thing as his being unable through the want of an inclination, or the prevalence of a contrary inclination, in such circumstances, and under the influence of such views.

To give some instances of this moral Inability....A woman of great honor and chastity may have a moral Inability to prostitute herself to her slave. A child of great love and duty to his parents, may be unable to be willing to kill his father. A very lascivious man, in case of certain opportunities and temptations, and in the absence of such and such restraints, may be unable to forbear gratifying his lust. A drunkard, under such and such circumstances, may be unable to forbear taking of strong drink. A very malicious man may be unable to exert benevolent acts to an enemy, or to desire his prosperity; yea, some may be so under the power of a vile disposition, that they may be unable to love those who are most worthy of their esteem and affection. A strong habit of vir-

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tue, and a great degree of holiness may cause a moral Inability to love wickedness in general, may render a man unable to take complacence in wicked persons or things; or to choose a wicked life, and prefer it to a virtuous life. And on the other hand, a great degree of habitual wickedness may lay a man under an inability to love and choose holiness; and render him utterly unable to love an infinitely holy being, or to choose and cleave to him as his chief good.

Here it may be of use to observe this distinction of moral Inability, viz. of that which is general and habitual, and that which is particular and occasional. By a general and habitual moral Inability, I mean an Inability in the heart to all exercises or acts of will of that nature or kind, through a fixed and habitual inclination, or an habitual and stated defect, or want of a certain kind of inclination. Thus a very ill natured man may be unable to exert such acts of benevolence, as another, who is full of good nature, commonly exerts; and a man, whose heart is habitually void of gratitude, may be unable to exert such and such grateful acts, through that stated defect of a grateful inclination. By particular and occasional moral Inability, I mean an Inability of the will or heart to a particular act, through the strength or defect of present motives, or of inducements presented to the view of the understanding, on this occasion. If it be so, that the will is always determined by the strongest motive, then it must always have an Inability, in this latter sense, to act otherwise than it does; it not being possible, in any case, that the will should, at present, go against the motive which has now, all things considered, the greatest strength and advantage to excite and induce it. The former of these kinds of moral Inability, consisting in that which is stated, habitual and general, is most commonly called by the name of Inability, because the word *Inability*, in its most proper and original signification, has respect to some *stated defect*.

And this especially obtains the name of *Inability* also upon another account: I before observed, that the word Inability in its original and most common use, is a relative term; and has respect to will and endeavor, as supposable in the

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ease, and as insufficient to bring to pass the thing desired and endeavored. Now there may be more of an appearance and shadow of this, with respect to the acts which arise from a fixed and strong habit, than others that arise only from transient occasions and causes. Indeed will and endeavor against, or diverse from present acts of the will, are in no case supposable, whether those acts be occasional or habitual; for that would be to suppose the will, at present, to be otherwise than, at present, it is. But yet there may be will and endeavor against future acts of the will, or volitions that are likely to take place, as viewed at a distance. It is no contradiction to suppose that the acts of the will at one time, may be against the acts of the will at another time; and there may be desires and endeavors to prevent or excite future acts of the will; but such desires and endeavors are, in many cases, rendered insufficient and vain, through fixedness of habit: When the occasion returns, the strength of habit overcomes, and baffles all such opposition. In this respect, a man may be in miserable slavery and bondage to a strong habit. But it may be comparatively easy to make an alteration with respect to such future acts as are only occasional and transient; because the occasion or transient cause, if foreseen, may often easily be prevented or avoided. On this account, the moral Inability that attends fixed habits, especially obtains the name of Inability. And then, as the will may remotely and indirectly resist itself, and do it in vain, in the case of strong habits; so reason may resist present acts of the will, and its resistance be insufficient; and this is more commonly the case also, when the acts arise from strong habit.

But it must be observed concerning moral Inability, in each kind of it, that the word *Inability* is used in a sense very diverse from its original import. The word signifies only a natural Inability, in the proper use of it; and is applied to such cases only wherein a present will or inclination to the thing, with respect to which a person is said to be unable, is supposable. It cannot be truly said, according to the ordinary use of language, that a malicious man, let him be ever so malicious, cannot hold his hand from striking, or that he is

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not able to shew his neighbor kindness; or that a drunkard, let his appetite be ever so strong, cannot keep the cup from his mouth. In the strictest propriety of speech, a man has a thing in his power, if he has it in his choice, or at his election: And a man cannot be truly said to be unable to do a thing, when he can do it if he will. It is improperly said, that a person cannot perform those external actions which are dependent on the act of the will, and which would be easily performed, if the act of the will were present. And if it be improperly said, that he cannot perform those external voluntary actions, which depend on the will, it is in some respect more improperly said, that he is unable to exert the acts of the will themselves; because it is more evidently false, with respect to these, that he cannot if he will: For to say so, is a downright contradiction: It is to say, he cannot will, if he does will. And in this case, not only is it true, that it is easy for a man to do the thing if he will, but the very willing is the doing; when once he has willed, the thing is performed; and nothing else remains to be done. Therefore, in these things to ascribe a nonperformance to the want of power or ability, is not just; because the thing wanting is not a being able, but a being willing. There are faculties of mind, and capacity of nature, and every thing else sufficient, but a disposition: Nothing is wanting but a will.

SECTION V.

Concerning the Notion of Liberty, *and of* Moral Agency.

THE plain and obvious meaning of the words *Freedom* and *Liberty*, in common speech, is *power, opportunity or advantage, that any one has, to do as he pleases.* Or in other words, his being free from hinderance or impediment in the

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way of doing, or conducting in any respect, as he wills.* And the contrary to Liberty, whatever name we call that by, is a person's being hindered or unable to conduct as he will, or being necessitated to do otherwise.

If this which I have mentioned be the meaning of the word Liberty, in the ordinary use of language; as I trust that none that has ever learned to talk, and is unprejudiced, will deny; then it will follow, that in propriety of speech, neither Liberty, nor its contrary, can properly be ascribed to any being or thing, but that which has such a faculty, power or property, as is called will. For that which is possessed of no such thing as will, cannot have any power or opportunity of doing according to its will, nor be necessitated to act contrary to its will, nor be restrained from acting agreeably to it. And therefore to talk of Liberty, or the contrary, as belonging to the very will itself, is not to speak good sense; if we judge of sense, and nonsense, by the original and proper signification of words. For the will itself is not an Agent that has a will: The power of choosing itself, has not a power of choosing. That which has the power of volition or choice is the man or the soul, and not the power of volition itself. And he that has the Liberty of doing according to his will, is the Agent or doer who is possessed of the will; and not the will which he is possessed of. We say with propriety, that a bird let loose has power and Liberty to fly; but not that the bird's power of flying has a power and Liberty of flying. To be free is the property of an Agent, who is possessed of powers and faculties, as much as to be cunning, valiant, bountiful, or zealous. But these qualities are the properties of men or persons; and not the properties of properties.

There are two things that are contrary to this which is called Liberty in common speech. One is constraint; the same is otherwise called force, compulsion, and coaction; which is a person's being necessitated to do a thing contrary

* I say not only doing, but conducting; because a voluntary forbearing to do, sitting still, keeping silence, &c. are instances of persons' conduct, about which Liberty is exercised; though they are not so properly called doing.

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to his will. The other is restraint; which is his being hindered, and not having power to do according to his will. But that which has no will, cannot be the subject of these things.... I need say the less on this head, Mr. Locke having set the same thing forth, with so great clearness, in his *Essay on the Human Understanding*.

But one thing more I would observe concerning what is vulgarly called Liberty; namely, that power and opportunity for one to do and conduct as he will, or according to his choice, is all that is meant by it; without taking into the meaning of the word any thing of the cause or original of that choice; or at all considering how the person came to have such a volition; whether it was caused by some external motive or internal habitual bias; whether it was determined by some internal antecedent volition, or whether it happened without a cause; whether it was necessarily connected with something foregoing, or not connected. Let the person come by his volition or choice how he will, yet, if he is able, and there is nothing in the way to hinder his pursuing and executing his will, the man is fully and perfectly free, according to the primary and common notion of freedom.

What has been said may be sufficient to shew what is meant by Liberty, according to the common notions of mankind, and in the usual and primary acceptation of the word: But the word, as used by Arminians, Pelagians and others, who oppose the Calvinists, has an entirely different signification....These several things belong to their notion of Liberty. 1. That it consists in a selfdetermining power in the will, or a certain sovereignty the will has over itself, and its own acts, whereby it determines its own volitions; so as not to be dependent in its determinations, on any cause without itself, nor determined by any thing prior to its own acts. 2. Indifference belongs to Liberty in their notion of it, or that the mind, previous to the act of volition be, in equilibrio. 3. Contingence is another thing that belongs and is essential to it; not in the common acceptation of the word, as that has been already explained, but as opposed to all necessity, or any fixed and certain connexion with some previous ground or reason

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of its existence. They suppose the essence of Liberty so much to consist in these things, that unless the will of man be free in this sense, he has no real freedom, how much soever he may be at Liberty to act according to his will.

A moral Agent is a being that is capable of those actions that have a moral quality, and which can properly be denominated good or evil in a moral sense, virtuous or vicious, commendable or faulty. To moral Agency belongs a moral faculty, or sense of moral good and evil, or of such a thing as desert or worthiness, of praise or blame, reward or punishment; and a capacity which an Agent has of being influenced in his actions by moral inducements or motives, exhibited to the view of understanding and reason, to engage to a conduct agreeable to the moral faculty.

The sun is very excellent and beneficial in its action and influence on the earth, in warming it, and causing it to bring forth its fruits; but it is not a moral Agent. Its action, though good, is not virtuous or meritorious. Fire that breaks out in a city, and consumes great part of it, is very mischievous in its operation; but is not a moral Agent. What it does is not faulty or sinful, or deserving of any punishment. The brute creatures are not moral Agents. The actions of some of them are very profitable and pleasant; others are very hurtful; yet, seeing they have no moral faculty, or sense of desert, and do not act from choice guided by understanding, or with a capacity of reasoning and reflecting, but only from instinct, and are not capable of being influenced by moral inducements, their actions are not properly sinful or virtuous; nor are they properly the subjects of any such moral treatment for what they do, as moral Agents are for their faults or good deeds.

Here it may be noted, that there is a circumstantial difference between the moral Agency of a ruler and a subject. I call it circumstantial, because it lies only in the difference of moral inducements they are capable of being influenced by, arising from the difference of circumstances. A ruler, acting, in that capacity only, is not capable of being influenced by a moral law, and its sanctions of threatenings and promi-

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ses, rewards and punishments, as the subject is; though both may be influenced by a knowledge of moral good and evil. And therefore the moral agency of the Supreme Being, who acts only in the capacity of a ruler towards his creatures, and never as a subject, differs in that respect from the moral Agency of created intelligent beings. God's actions, and particularly those which are to be attributed to him as moral governor, are morally good in the highest degree. They are most perfectly holy and righteous; and we must conceive of Him as influenced in the highest degree, by that which, above all others, is properly a moral inducement, viz. the moral good which He sees in such and such things: And therefore He is, in the most proper sense, a moral Agent, the source of all moral ability and Agency, the fountain and rule of all virtue and moral good; though by reason of his being supreme over all, it is not possible He should be under the influence of law or command, promises or threatenings, rewards or punishments, counsels or warnings. The essential qualities of a moral Agent are in God, in the greatest possible perfection; such as understanding, to perceive the difference between moral good and evil; a capacity of discerning that moral worthiness and demerit, by which some things are praiseworthy, others deserving of blame and punishment; and also a capacity of choice, and choice guided by understanding, and a power of acting according to his choice or pleasure, and being capable of doing those things which are in the highest sense praiseworthy. And herein does very much consist that image of God wherein he made man, (which we read of Gen. i. 26, 27, and chapter ix. 6.) by which God distinguishes man from the beasts, viz. in those faculties and principles of nature, whereby He is capable of moral Agency. Herein very much consists the natural image of God; as his spiritual and moral image, wherein man was made at first, consisted in that moral excellency, that he was endowed with.

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PART II.

Wherein it is considered whether there is or can be any such Sort of Freedom of Will, *as that wherein* Arminians *place the Essence of the Liberty of all moral Agents; and whether any such Thing ever* was *or* can be *conceived of.*

SECTION I.

Shewing the manifest Inconsistence of the Arminian *Notion of* Liberty of Will, *consisting in the Will's* Selfdetermining Power.

HAVING taken notice of those things which may be necessary to be observed, concerning the meaning of the principal terms and phrases made use of in controversies, concerning human Liberty, and particularly observed what Liberty is, according to the common language and general apprehension of mankind, and what it is as understood and maintained by Arminians; I proceed to consider the Arminian notion of the Freedom of the Will, and the supposed necessity of it in order to moral agency, or in order to any one's being capable of virtue or vice, and properly the subject of command or counsel, praise or blame, promises or threatenings, rewards or punishments; or whether that which has been described, as the thing meant by Liberty in common speech, be not sufficient, and the only Liberty which makes or can make any one a moral agent, and so properly the subject of these things. In this Part, I shall consider whether any such thing be possible or conceivable, as that Freedom of Will which Arminians insist on; and shall inquire, whether any such sort of Liberty be necessary to moral agency, &c. in the next Part.

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And first of all, I shall consider the notion of a selfdetermining Power in the will: Wherein, according to the Arminians, does most essentially consist the Will's Freedom; and shall particularly inquire, whether it be not plainly absurd, and a manifest inconsistence, to suppose that the will itself determines all the free acts of the Will.

Here I shall not insist on the great impropriety of such phrases and ways of speaking as the Will's determining itself; because actions are to be ascribed to agents, and not properly to the powers of agents; which improper way of speaking leads to many mistakes, and much confusion, as Mr. Locke observes. But I shall suppose that the Arminians, when they speak of the Will's determining itself, do by the Will mean the soul willing. I shall take it for granted, that when they speak of the Will, as the determiner, they mean the soul in the exercise of a power of willing, or acting voluntarily. I shall suppose this to be their meaning, because nothing else can be meant, without the grossest and plainest absurdity. In all cases when we speak of the powers or principles of acting, as doing such things, we mean that the agents which have these Powers of acting, do them in the exercise of those Powers. So when we say, valor fights courageously, we mean, the man who is under the influence of valor fights courageously. When we say, love seeks the object loved, we mean, the person loving seeks that object. When we say, the understanding discerns, we mean the soul in the exercise of that faculty. So when it is said, the will decides or determines, the meaning must be, that the person in the exercise of a Power of willing and choosing, or the soul acting voluntarily, determines.

Therefore, if the Will determines all its own free acts, the soul determines all the free acts of the Will in the exercise of a Power of willing and choosing; or which is the same thing, it determines them of choice; it determines its own acts by choosing its own acts. If the Will determines the Will, then choice orders and determines the choice; and acts of choice are subject to the decision, and follow the conduct of other acts of choice. And therefore if the Will deter-

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mines all its own free acts, then every free act of choice is determined by a preceding act of choice, choosing that act. And if that preceding act of the Will or choice be also a free act, then by these principles, in this act too, the Will is self-determined; that is, this, in like manner, is an act that the soul voluntarily chooses; or, which is the same thing, it is an act determined still by a preceding act of the Will, choosing that. And the like may again be observed of the last mentioned act, which brings us directly to a contradiction; for it supposes an act of the Will preceding the first act in the whole train, directing and determining the rest; or a free act of the Will, before the first free act of the Will. Or else we must come at last to an act of the Will, determining the consequent acts, wherein the Will is not selfdetermined, and so is not a free act, in this notion of freedom; but if the first act in the train, determining and fixing the rest, be not free, none of them all can be free; as is manifest at first view, but shall be demonstrated presently.

If the Will, which we find governs the members of the body and determines and commands their motions and actions, does also govern itself, and determine its own motions and actions, it doubtless determines them the same way, even by antecedent volitions. The Will determines which way the hands and feet shall move, by an act of volition or choice; and there is no other way of the Will's determining, directing or commanding any thing at all. Whatsoever the Will commands, it commands by an act of the Will. And if it has itself under its command, and determines itself in its own actions, it doubtless does it the same way that it determines other things which are under its command. So that if the freedom of the Will consists in this, that it has itself and its own actions under its command and direction, and its own volitions are determined by itself, it will follow, that every free volition arises from another antecedent volition, directing and commanding that; and if that directing volition be also free, in that also the Will is determined; that is to say, that directing volition is determined by another going before that, and so on, until we come to the first volition in the

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whole series; and if that first volition be free, and the Will selfdetermined in it, then that is determined by another volition preceding that, which is a contradiction; because by the supposition, it can have none before it to direct or determine it, being the first in the train. But if that first volition is not determined by any preceding act of the Will, then that act is not determined by the Will, and so is not free in the *Arminian* notion of freedom, which consists in the Will's selfdetermination. And if that first act of the Will, which determines and fixes the subsequent acts, be not free, none of the following acts, which are determined by it, can be free. If we suppose there are five acts in the train, the fifth and last determined by the fourth, and the fourth by the third, the third by the second, and the second by the first; if the first is not determined by the Will, and so not free, then none of them are truly determined by the Will; that is, that each of them is as it is, and not otherwise, is not first owing to the Will, but to the determination of the first in the series, which is not dependent on the Will, and is that which the Will has no hand in the determination of. And this being that which decides what the rest shall be, and determines their existence; therefore the first determination of their existence is not from the Will. The case is just the same, if instead of a chain of five acts of the Will, we should suppose a succession of ten, or an hundred, or ten thousand. If the first act be not free, being determined by something out of the Will, and this determines the next to be agreeable to itself, and that the next, and so on; they are none of them free, but all originally depend on, and are determined by some cause out of the Will; and so all freedom in the case is excluded, and no act of the Will can be free, according to this notion of freedom. If we should suppose a long chain of ten thousand links, so connected, that if the first link moves, it will move the next, and that the next, and so the whole chain must be determined to motion, and in the direction of its motion, by the motion of the first link, and that is moved by something else. In this case, though all the links but one, are moved by other parts of the same chain; yet it ap-

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pears that the motion of no one, nor the direction of its motion, is from any selfmoving or selfdetermining power in the chain, any more than if every link were immediately moved by something that did not belong to the chain. If the Will be not free in the first act, which causes the next, then neither is it free in the next, which is caused by that first act; for though indeed the Will caused it, yet it did not cause it freely, because the preceding act, by which it was caused, was not free. And again, if the Will be not free in the second act, so neither can it be in the third, which is caused by that; because in like manner, that third was determined by an act of the Will that was not free. And so we may go on to the next act, and from that to the next; and how long soever the succession of acts is, it is all one. If the first on which the whole chain depends, and which determines all the rest, be not a free act, the Will is not free in causing or determining any one of those acts, because the act by which it determines them all, is not a free act, and therefore the Will is no more free in determining them, than if it did not cause them at all. Thus, this *Arminian* notion of Liberty of the Will, consisting in the Will's *selfdetermination*, is repugnant to itself, and shuts itself wholly out of the world.

SECTION II.

Several supposed ways of Evading *the foregoing Reasoning, considered.*

IF to evade the force of what has been observed, it should be said, that when the *Arminians* speak of the Will's determining its own acts, they do not mean that the Will determines its acts by any preceding act, or that one act of the Will determines another; but only that the faculty or power of Will, or the soul in the use of that power, determines its own volitions; and that it does it without any act going be-

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fore the act determined; such an evasion would be full of gross absurdity....I confess, it is an evasion of my own inventing, and I do not know but I should wrong the *Arminians*, in supposing that any of them would make use of it. But it being as good an one as I can invent, I would observe upon it a few things.

First. If the faculty or power of the Will determines an act of volition, or the soul in the use or exercise of that power, determines it, that is the same thing as for the soul to determine volition by an act of Will. For an exercise of the power of Will, and an act of that power, are the same thing. Therefore to say, that the power of Will, or the soul in the use or exercise of that power, determines volition, without an act of Will preceding the volition determined, is a contradiction.

Secondly. If a power of Will determines the act of the will, then a power of choosing determines it. For, as was before observed, in every act of Will, there is choice, and a power of willing is a power of choosing. But if a power of choosing determines the act of volition, it determines it by choosing it. For it is most absurd to say, that a power of choosing determines one thing rather than another, without choosing any thing. But if a power of choosing determines volition by choosing it, then here is the act of volition determined by an antecedent choice, choosing that volition.

Thirdly. To say, the faculty, or the soul, determines its own volitions, but not by any act, is a contradiction. Because, for the soul to direct, decide, or determine any thing, is to act; and this is supposed; for the soul is here spoken of as being a cause in this affair, bringing something to pass, or doing something; or which is the same thing, exerting itself in order to an effect, which effect is the determination of volition, or the particular kind and manner of an act of Will. But certainly this exertion or action is not the same with the effect, in order to the production of which it is exerted, but must be something prior to it.

Again. The advocates for this notion of the freedom of the Will, speak of a certain sovereignty in the Will, where-

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by it has power to determine its own volitions. And therefore the determination of volition must itself be an act of the Will; for otherwise it can be no exercise of that supposed power and sovereignty.

Again. If the Will determine itself, then either the Will is *active* in determining its volitions, or it is not. If it be active in it, then the determination is an act of the Will; and so there is one act of the Will determining another. But if the Will is not *active* in the determination, then how does it *exercise* any liberty in it? These gentlemen suppose that the thing wherein the Will exercises liberty, is in its determining its own acts. But how can this be, if it be not active in determining? Certainly the Will, or the soul, cannot exercise any liberty in that wherein it doth not act, or wherein it doth not exercise itself. So that if either part of this dilemma be taken, this scheme of liberty, consisting in self-determining power, is overthrown. If there be an act of the Will in determining all its own free acts, then one free act of the Will is determined by another; and so we have the absurdity of every free act, even the very first, determined by a foregoing free act. But if there be no act or exercise of the Will in determining its own acts, then no liberty is exercised in determining them. From whence it follows, that no liberty consists in the Will's power to determine its own acts; or, which is the same thing, that there is no such thing as liberty consisting in a selfdetermining power of the Will.

If it should be said, that although it be true, if the soul determines its own volitions, it must be active in so doing, and the determination itself must be an act; yet there is no need of supposing this act to be prior to the volition determined; but the Will or soul determines the act of the Will in willing; it determines its own volition, *in* the very act of volition; it directs and limits the act of the Will, causing it to be so and not otherwise, in exerting the act, without any preceding act to exert that. If any should say after this manner, they must mean one of these three things: Either, 1. That the determining act, though it be before the act determined in the order of nature, yet is not before it in order

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of time. Or, 2. That the determining act is not before the act determined, either in the order of time or nature, nor is truly distinct from it; but that the soul's determining the act of volition is the same thing with its exerting the act of volition; the mind's exerting such a particular act, is its causing and determining the act. Or, 3. That volition has no cause, and is no effect; but comes into existence, with such a particular determination, without any ground or reason of its existence and determination. I shall consider these distinctly.

1. If all that is meant, be, that the determining act is not before the act determined in order of time, it will not help the case at all, though it should be allowed. If it be before the determined act in the order of nature, being the cause or ground of its existence, this as much proves it to be distinct from it, and independent of it, as if it were before in the order of time. As the cause of the particular motion of a natural body in a certain direction, may have no distance as to time, yet cannot be the same with the motion effected by it, but must be as distinct from it as any other cause that is before its effect in the order of time; as the architect is distinct from the house which he builds, or the father distinct from the son which he begets. And if the act of the Will determining be distinct from the act determined, and before it in the order of nature, then we can go back from one to another, till we come to the first in the series, which has no act of the Will before it in the order of nature, determining it; and consequently is an act not determined by the Will, and so not a free act, in this notion of freedom. And this being the act which determines all the rest, none of them are free acts. As when there is a chain of many links, the first of which only is taken hold of and drawn by hand; all the rest may follow and be moved at the same instant, without any distance of time; but yet the motion of one link is before that of another in the order of nature; the last is moved by the next, and so till we come to the first; which not being moved by any other, but by something distinct from the whole chain, this as much proves that no part is moved by

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any selfmoving power in the chain, as if the motion of one link followed that of another in the order of time.

2. If any should say, that the determining act is not before the determined act, either in order of time, or of nature, nor is distinct from it; but that the exertion of the act is the determination of the act; that for the soul to exert a particular volition, is for it to cause and determine that act of volition; I would on this observe, that the thing in question seems to be forgotten or kept out of sight, in darkness and unintelligibleness of speech; unless such an objector would mean to contradict himself. The very act of volition itself is doubtless a determination of mind; i. e. it is the mind's drawing up a conclusion, or coming to a choice between two things or more, proposed to it. But determining among external objects of choice, is not the same with determining the act of choice itself, among various possible acts of choice. The question is, what influences, directs, or determines the mind or Will to come to such a conclusion or choice as it does? Or what is the cause, ground or reason, why it concludes thus, and not otherwise? Now it must be answered, according to the *Arminian* notion of freedom, that the Will influences, orders and determines itself thus to act. And if it does, I say, it must be by some antecedent act. To say, it is caused, influenced and determined by something, and yet not determined by any thing antecedent, either in order of time or of nature, is a contradiction. For that is what is meant by a thing's being prior in the order of nature, that it is some way the cause or reason of the thing, with respect to which it is said to be prior.

If the particular act or exertion of Will, which comes into existence, be any thing properly determined at all, then it has some cause of its existing, and of its existing in such a particular determinate manner, and not another; some cause, whose influence decides the matter; which cause is distinct from the effect, and prior to it. But to say, that the Will or mind orders, influences and determines itself to exert such an act as it does, by the very exertion itself, is to make the exertion both cause and effect; or the exerting such an act, to be a cause of the exertion of such an act. For

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the question is, What is the cause and reason of the soul's exerting such an act? To which the answer is, the soul exerts such an act, and that is the cause of it. And so, by this, the exertion must be prior in the order of nature to itself, and distinct from itself.

3. If the meaning be, that the soul's exertion of such a particular act of Will, is a thing that comes to pass of itself, without any cause; and that there is absolutely no ground or reason of the soul's being determined to exert such a volition, and make such a choice rather than another, I say, if this be the meaning of Arminians, when they contend so earnestly for the Will's determining its own acts, and for liberty of Will consisting in selfdetermining power; they do nothing but confound themselves and others with words without meaning. In the question, What determines the Will? And in their answer, that the Will determines itself, and in all the dispute about it, it seems to be taken for granted, that something determines the Will; and the controversy on this head is not, whether any thing at all determines it, or whether its determination has any cause or foundation at all; but where the foundation of it is, whether in the Will itself, or somewhere else. But if the thing intended be what is abovementioned, then all comes to this, that nothing at all determines the Will; volition having absolutely no cause or foundation of its existence, either within or without. There is a great noise made about selfdetermining power, as the source of all free acts of the Will; but when the matter comes to be explained, the meaning is, that no power at all is the source of these acts, neither selfdetermining power, nor any other, but they arise from nothing; no cause, no power, no influence being at all concerned in the matter.

However, this very thing, even that the free acts of the Will are events which come to pass without a cause, is certainly implied in the Arminian notion of liberty of Will; though it be very inconsistent with many other things in their scheme, and repugnant to some things implied in their notion of liberty. Their opinion implies, that the particular determination of volition is without any cause; because they hold the free acts of the Will to be contingent events;

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and contingence is essential to freedom in their notion of it. But certainly, those things which have a prior ground and reason of their particular existence, a cause which antecedently determines them to be, and determines them to be just as they are, do not happen contingently. If something foregoing, by a causal influence and connexion, determines and fixes precisely their coming to pass, and the manner of it, then it does not remain a contingent thing whether they shall come to pass or no.

And because it is a question, in many respects, very important in this controversy about the freedom of Will, whether the free acts of the Will are events which come to pass without a cause, I shall be particular in examining this point in the two following sections.

SECTION III.

Whether any Event whatsoever, and Volition *in particular, can come to pass without a* Cause *of its existence.*

BEFORE I enter on any argument on this subject, I would explain how I would be understood, when I use the word *Cause* in this discourse: Since, for want of a better word, I shall have occasion to use it in a sense which is more extensive, than that in which it is sometimes used. The word is often used in so restrained a sense as to signify only that which has a positive efficiency or influence to produce a thing, or bring it to pass. But there are many things which have no such positive productive influence; which yet are Causes in that respect, that they have truly the nature of a ground or reason why some things are, rather than others; or why they are as they are, rather than otherwise. Thus the absence of the sun in the night, is not the Cause of the falling of the dew at that time, in the same manner as its

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beams are the Cause of the ascending of the vapors in the day time; and its withdrawment in the winter, is not in the same manner the Cause of the freezing of the waters, as its approach in the spring is the Cause of their thawing. But yet the withdrawment or absence of the sun is an antecedent, with which these effects in the night and winter are connected, and on which they depend; and is one thing that belongs to the ground and reason why they come to pass at that time, rather than at other times; though the absence of the sun is nothing positive, nor has any positive influence.

It may be further observed, that when I speak of connexion of Causes and Effects, I have respect to moral Causes, as well as those that are called natural in distinction from them. Moral Causes may be Causes in as proper a sense, as any causes whatsoever; may have as real an influence, and may as truly be the ground and reason of an Event's coming to pass.

Therefore I sometimes use the word *Cause*, in this inquiry, to signify any antecedent, either natural or moral, positive or negative, on which an Event, either a thing, or the manner and circumstance of a thing, so depends, that it is the ground and reason, either in whole, or in part, why it is, rather than not; or why it is as it is, rather than otherwise; or, in other words, any antecedent with which a consequent Event is so connected, that it truly belongs to the reason why the proposition which affirms that Event, is true; whether it has any positive influence or not. And in an agreeableness to this, I sometimes use the word effect for the consequence of another thing, which is perhaps rather an occasion than a Cause, most properly speaking.

I am the more careful thus to explain my meaning, that I may cut off occasion, from any that might seek occasion to cavil and object against some things which I may say concerning the dependence of all things which come to pass, on some Cause, and their connexion with their Cause.

Having thus explained what I mean by Cause, I assert that nothing ever comes to pass without a Cause. What is self-existent must be from eternity, and must be unchangeable;

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but as to all things that begin to be, they are not selfexistent, and therefore must have some foundation of their existence without themselves.——That whatsoever begins to be, which before was not, must have a Cause why it then begins to exist, seems to be the first dictate of the common and natural sense which God hath implanted in the minds of all mankind, and the main foundation of all our reasonings about the existence of things, past, present, or to come.

And this dictate of common sense equally respects substances and modes, or things and the manner and circumstances of things. Thus, if we see a body which has hitherto been at rest, start out of a state of rest, and begin to move, we do as naturally and necessarily suppose there is some Cause or reason of this new mode of existence, as of the existence of a body itself which had hitherto not existed. And so if a body, which had hitherto moved in a certain direction, should suddenly change the direction of its motion; or if it should put off its old figure, and take a new one; or change its color: The beginning of these new modes is a new Event, and the mind of mankind necessarily supposes that there is some Cause or reason of them.

If this grand principle of common sense be taken away, all arguing from effects to Causes ceaseth, and so all knowledge of any existence, besides what we have by the most direct and immediate intuition. Particularly all our proof of the being of God ceases: We argue His being from our own being, and the being of other things, which we are sensible once were not, but have begun to be; and from the being of the world, with all its constituent parts, and the manner of their existence; all which we see plainly are not necessary in their own nature, and so not selfexistent, and therefore must have a Cause. But if things, not in themselves necessary, may begin to be without a Cause, all this arguing is vain.

Indeed, I will not affirm, that there is in the nature of things no foundation for the knowledge of the Being of God without any evidence of it from His works. I do suppose there is a great absurdity in the nature of things simply considered, in supposing that there should be no God, or in denying Be-

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ing in general, and supposing an eternal, absolute, universal nothing; and therefore that here would be foundation of intuitive evidence that it cannot be; and that eternal, infinite, most perfect Being must be; if we had strength and comprehension of mind sufficient, to have a clear idea of general and universal Being, or, which is the same thing, of the infinite, eternal, most perfect Divine Nature and Essence. But then we should not properly come to the knowledge of the Being of God by arguing; but our evidence would be intuitive: We should see it, as we see other things that are necessary in themselves, the contraries of which are in their own nature absurd and contradictory; as we see that twice two is four; and as we see that a circle has no angles. If we had as clear an idea of universal infinite entity, as we have of these other things, I suppose we should most intuitively see the absurdity of supposing such Being not to be; should immediately see there is no room for the question, whether it is possible that Being, in the most general abstracted notion of it, should not be. But we have not that strength and extent of mind, to know this certainly in this intuitive independent manner; but the way that mankind come to the knowledge of the Being of God, is that which the apostle speaks of, Rom. i. 20. "The invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen; being understood by the things that are made; even his eternal power and Godhead." We first ascend, and prove *a posteriori*, or from effects, that there must be an eternal Cause; and then secondly, prove by argumentation, not intuition, that this Being must be necessarily existent; and then thirdly, from the proved necessity of his existence, we may descend, and prove many of his perfections *a priori*.*

* To the inquirer after truth it may here be recommended, as a matter of some consequence, to keep in mind the precise difference between an argument *a priori* and one *a posteriori*, a distinction of considerable use, as well as of long standing, among divines, metaphysicians, and logical writers. An argument from either of these, when *legitimately* applied, may amount to a demonstration, when used, for instance, relatively to the being and perfections of God; but the one should be confined to the *existence* of Deity, while the other

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But if once this grand principle of common sense be given up, that what is not necessary in itself, must have a Cause; and we begin to maintain, that things may come into existence, and begin to be, which heretofore have not been, of themselves without any Cause; all our means of ascending in our arguing from the creature to the Creator, and all our vidence of the Being of God, is cut off at one blow. In this case, we cannot prove that there is a God, either from the Being of the world, and the creatures in it, or from the manner of their being, their order, beauty and use. For if things may come into existence without any Cause at all, then they doubtless may without any Cause answerable to the effect. Our minds do alike naturally suppose and determine both these things; namely, that what begins to be has a Cause, and also that it has a Cause proportionable and agreeable to the effect. The same principle which leads us to determine, that there cannot be any thing coming to pass without a Cause, leads us to determine that there cannot be more in the effect than in the Cause.

Yea, if once it should be allowed, that things may come to pass without a Cause, we should not only have no proof of the Being of God, but we should be without evidence of the existence of any thing whatsoever, but our own immediately present ideas and consciousness. For we have no way to

is applicable to his *perfections*. By the argument *a posteriori* we rise *from* the effect to the cause, from the stream to the fountain, from what is *posterior* to what is prior; in other words, from what is contingent to what is absolute, from number to unity; that is, from the *manifestation* of God to his *existence*. By the argument *a priori* we descend *from* the cause to the effect, from the fountain to the stream, from what is *prior* to what is posterior; that is, from the necessary existence of God we safely infer certain properties and perfections. To attempt a demonstration of the existence of a first cause, or the Being of God, *a priori*, would be most absurd; for it would be an attempt to prove a *prior* ground or cause of existence of a *first* cause; or, that there is some cause *before* the *very first*. The argument *a priori*, therefore, is not *applicable* to prove the divine *existence*. For *this* end, the argument *a posteriori* alone is legitimate; and its conclusiveness rests on the axiom, that "there can be *no effect without a cause*." The absurdity of denying this axiom is abundantly demonstrated by our author. W.

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prove any thing else, but by arguing from effects to causes? From the ideas now immediately in view; we argue other things not immediately in view: From sensations now excited in us, we infer the existence of things without us, as the Causes of these sensations; and from the existence of these things, we argue other things, which they depend on, as effects on Causes. We infer the past existence of ourselves, or any thing else, by memory; only as we argue, that the ideas, which are now in our minds, are the consequences of past ideas and sensations....We immediately perceive nothing else but the ideas which are this moment extant in our minds. We perceive or know other things only by means of these, as necessarily connected with others, and dependent on them. But if things may be without Causes, all this necessary connexion and dependence is dissolved, and so all means of our knowledge is gone. If there be no absurdity nor difficulty in supposing one thing to start out of nonexistence into being, of itself without a Cause; then there is no absurdity nor difficulty in supposing the same of millions of millions. For nothing, or no difficulty multiplied, still is nothing, or no difficulty, nothing multiplied by nothing, does not increase the sum.

And indeed, according to the hypothesis I am opposing, of the acts of the Will coming to pass without a Cause, it is the case in fact, that millions of millions of Events are continually coming into existence contingently, without any Cause or reason why they do so, all over the world, every day and hour, through all ages. So it is in a constant succession, in every moral agent. This contingency, this efficient nothing, this effectual No Cause, is always ready at hand, to produce this sort of effects, as long as the agent exists, and as often as he has occasion.

If it were so, that things only of one kind, viz. acts of the Will, seemed to come to pass of themselves; but those of this sort in general came into being thus; and it were an event that was continual, and that happened in a course, wherever were capable subjects of such events; this very thing would demonstrate that there was some Cause of them, which made such a difference between this Event and others, and

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that they did not really happen contingently. For contingence is blind, and does not pick and choose for a particular sort of events. Nothing has no choice. This No Cause, which causes no existence, cannot cause the existence which comes to pass, to be of one particular sort only, distinguished from all others. Thus, that only one sort of matter drops out of the heavens, even water, and that this comes so often, so constantly and plentifully, all over the world, in all ages, shows that there is some Cause or reason of the falling of water out of the heavens; and that something besides mere contingence has a hand in the matter.

If we should suppose nonentity to be about to bring forth; and things were coming into existence, without any Cause or antecedent, on which the existence, or kind, or manner of existence depends; or which could at all determine whether the things should be stones, or stars, or beasts, or angels, or human bodies, or souls, or only some new motion or figure in natural bodies, or some new sensations in animals, or new ideas in the human understanding, or new volitions in the Will; or any thing else of all the infinite number of possibles; then certainly it would not be expected, although many millions of millions of things are coming into existence in this manner, all over the face of the earth, that they should all be only of one particular kind, and that it should be thus in all ages, and that this sort of existences should never fail to come to pass where there is room for them, or a subject capable of them, and that constantly, whenever there is occasion for them.

If any should imagine, there is something in the sort of Event that renders it possible for it to come into existence without a Cause, and should say, that the free acts of the Will are existences of an exceeding different nature from other things; by reason of which they may come into existence without any previous ground or reason of it, though other things cannot; if they make this objection in good earnest, it would be an evidence of their strangely forgetting themselves; for they would be giving an account of some ground of the existence of a thing, when at the same time they would

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maintain there is no ground of its existence. Therefore I would observe, that the particular nature of existence, be it ever so diverse from others, can lay no foundation for that thing's coming into existence without a Cause; because to suppose this, would be to suppose the particular nature of existence to be a thing prior to the existence; and so a thing which makes way for existence, with such a circumstance, namely, without a cause or reason of existence. But that which in any respect makes way for a thing's coming into being, or for any manner or circumstance of its first existence, must be prior to the existence. The distinguished nature of the effect, which is something belonging to the effect, cannot have influence backward, to act before it is. The peculiar nature of that thing called volition, can do nothing, can have no influence, while it is not. And afterwards it is too late for its influence; for then the thing has made sure of existence already, without its help.

So that it is indeed as repugnant to reason, to suppose that an act of the Will should come into existence without a Cause, as to suppose the human soul, or an angel, or the globe of the earth, or the whole universe, should come into existence without a Cause. And if once we allow, that such a sort of effect as a Volition may come to pass without a Cause, how do we know but that many other sorts of effects may do so too? It is not the particular kind of effect that makes the absurdity of supposing it has being without a Cause, but something which is common to all things that ever begin to be, viz. That they are not selfexistent, or necessary in the nature of things.

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SECTION IV.

Whether Volition *can arise without a Cause through the* Activity *of the Nature of the Soul.*

THE author of the *Essay on the Freedom of the Will in God and the Creatures*, in answer to that objection against his doctrine of a selfdetermining power in the will, (p. 68, 69.) "That nothing is, or comes to pass, without a sufficient reason why it is, and why it is in this manner rather than another, allows that it is thus in *corporeal things*, which are, properly and philosophically speaking, passive beings; but denies that it is thus in spirits, which are beings of an active nature, who have the spring of action within themselves, and can determine themselves. By which it is plainly supposed, that such an event as an act of the Will, may come to pass in a spirit, without a sufficient reason why it comes to pass, or why it is after this manner, rather than another; by reason of the activity of the nature of a spirit....But certainly this author, in this matter, must be very unwary and inadvertent. For,

1. The objection or difficulty proposed by this author, seems to be forgotten in his answer or solution. The very difficulty, as he himself proposes it, is this; How an event can come to pass without a sufficient reason why it is, or why it is in this manner rather than another? Instead of solving this difficulty, or answering this question with regard to Volition, as he proposes, he forgets himself, and answers another question quite diverse, and wholly inconsistent with this, viz. What is a sufficient reason why it is, and why it is in this manner rather than another? And he assigns the active being's own determination as the Cause, and a Cause sufficient for the effect; and leaves all the difficulty unresolved, and the question unanswered, which yet returns, even, how the soul's own determination, which he speaks of, came to exist, and to be what it was without a Cause? The activity of the soul may enable it to be the Cause of effects, but it does not at all enable or help it to be the subject of effects which have no Cause,

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which is the thing this author supposes concerning acts of the Will. Activity of nature will no more enable a being to produce effects, and determine the manner of their existence, within itself, without a Cause, than out of itself, in some other being. But if an active being should, through its activity, produce and determine an effect in some external object, how absurd would it be to say, that the effect was produced without a Cause!

2. The question is not so much, how a spirit endowed with activity comes to act, as why it exerts such an act, and not another; or why it acts with such a particular determination: If activity of nature be the Cause why a spirit (the soul of man for instance) acts, and does not lie still; yet that alone is not the Cause why its action is thus and thus limited, directed and determined. Active nature is a general thing; it is an ability or tendency of nature to action, generally taken; which may be a Cause why the soul acts as occasion or reason is given; but this alone cannot be a sufficient Cause why the soul exerts such a particular act, at such a time, rather than others. In order to this, there must be something besides a general tendency to action; there must also be a particular tendency to that individual action. If it should be asked, why the soul of man uses its activity in such a manner as it does, and it should be answered, that the soul uses its activity thus, rather than otherwise, because it has activity, would such an answer satisfy a rational man? Would it not rather be looked upon as a very impertinent one?

3. An active being can bring no effects to pass by his activity, but what are consequent upon his acting. He produces nothing by his activity, any other way than by the exercise of his activity, and so nothing but the fruits of its exercise; he brings nothing to pass by a dormant activity. But the exercise of his activity is action; and so his action, or exercise of his activity, must be prior to the effects of his activity. If an active being produces an effect in another being, about which his activity is conversant, the effect being the fruit of his activity, his activity must be first exercised or exerted, and the effect of it must follow. So it must be, with equal reason, if the active being is his own object, and his ac-

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tivity is conversant about himself, to produce and determine some effect in himself; still the exercise of his activity must go before the effect, which he brings to pass and determines by it. And therefore his activity cannot be the Cause of the determination of the first action, or exercise of activity itself, whence the effects of activity arise, for that would imply a contradiction; it would be to say, the first exercise of activity is before the first exercise of activity, and is the Cause of it.

4. That the soul, though an active substance, cannot diversify its own acts, but by first acting; or be a determining Cause of different acts, or any different effects, sometimes of one kind, and sometimes of another, any other way than in consequence of its own diverse acts, is manifest by this; that if so, then the same Cause, the same causal power, force or influence, without variation in any respect, would produce different effects at different times. For the same substance of the soul before it acts, and the same active nature of the soul before it is exerted, i. e. before in the order of nature, would be the Cause of different effects, viz. different Volitions at different times. But the substance of the soul before it acts, and its active nature before it is exerted, are the same without variation. For it is some act that makes the first variation in the Cause, as to any causal exertion, force, or influence. But if it be so, that the soul has no different causality, or diverse causal force or influence, in producing these diverse effects; then it is evident, that the soul has no influence, no hand in the diversity of the effect; and that the difference of the effect cannot be owing to any thing in the soul; or, which is the same thing, the soul does not determine the diversity of the effect; which is contrary to the supposition. It is true, the substance of the soul before it acts, and before there is any difference in that respect, may be in a different state and circumstance; but those whom I oppose, will not allow the different circumstances of the soul to be the determining Causes of the acts of the Will, as being contrary to their notion of selfdetermination and selfmotion.

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5. Let us suppose, as these divines do, that there are no acts of the soul, strictly speaking, but free Volitions; then it will follow, that the soul is an active being in nothing further than it is a voluntary or elective being; and whenever it produces effects actively, it produces effects voluntarily and electively. But to produce effects thus, is the same thing as to produce effects in consequence of, and according to its own choice. And if so, then surely the soul does not by its activity produce all its own acts of Will or choice themselves; for this, by the supposition, is to produce all its free acts of choice voluntarily and electively, or in consequence of its own free acts of choice, which brings the matter directly to the forementioned contradiction, of a free act of choice before the first free act of choice. According to these gentlemen's own notion of action, if there arises in the mind a Volition without a free act of the Will or choice to determine and produce it, the mind is not the active, voluntary Cause of that Volition, because it does not arise from, nor is regulated by choice or design. And therefore it cannot be, that the mind should be the active, voluntary, determining Cause of the first and leading Volition that relates to the affair. The mind's being a designing Cause, only enables it to produce effects in consequence of its design; it will not enable it to be the designing Cause of all its own designs. The mind's being an elective Cause, will only enable it to produce effects in consequence of its elections, and according to them; but cannot enable it to be the elective Cause of all its own elections; because that supposes an election before the first election. So the mind's being an active Cause enables it to produce effects in consequence of its own acts, but cannot enable it to be the determining Cause of all its own acts; for that is still in the same manner a contradiction; as it supposes a determining act conversant about the first act, and prior to it, having a causal influence on its existence, and manner of existence.

I can conceive of nothing else that can be meant by the soul's having power to cause and determine its own Volitions, as a being to whom God has given a power of action, but this; that God has given power to the soul, sometimes

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at least, to excite Volitions at its pleasure, or according as it chooses. And this certainly supposes, in all such cases, a choice preceding all Volitions which are thus caused, even the first of them; which runs into the forementioned great absurdity.

Therefore the activity of the nature of the soul affords no relief from the difficulties which the notion of a selfdetermining power in the Will is attended with, nor will it help, in the least, its absurdities and inconsistencies.

SECTION V.

Shewing, that if the things asserted in these Evasions should be supposed to be true, they are altogether impertinent, and cannot help the cause of Arminian *liberty; and how (this being the state of the case)* Arminian *writers are obliged to talk inconsistently.*

WHAT was last observed in the preceding section may shew, not only that the active nature of the soul cannot be a reason why an act of the Will is, or why it is in this manner, rather than another; but also that if it could be so, and it could be proved that Volitions are contingent events, in that sense, that their being and manner of being is not fixed or determined by any cause, or any thing antecedent; it would not at all serve the purpose of the Arminians, to establish the freedom of the Will, according to their notion of its freedom as consisting in the Will's *determination of itself*; which supposes every free act of the Will to be determined by some act of the Will going before to determine it; inasmuch as for the Will to determine a thing, is the same as for the soul to determine a thing by *Willing*; and there is no way that the Will can determine an act of the Will, but by willing that

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act of the Will; or, which is the same thing, *choosing* it. So that here must be two acts of the Will in the case, one going before another, one conversant about the other, and the latter the object of the former, and chosen by the former. If the Will does not cause and determine the act by choice, it does not cause or determine it at all; for that which is not determined by choice, is not determined voluntarily or willingly: And to say, that the Will determines something which the soul does not determine willingly, is as much as to say, that something is done by the Will, which the soul doth not with its Will.

So that if Arminian liberty of Will, consisting in the Will's determining its own acts, be maintained, the old absurdity and contradiction must be maintained, that every free act of Will is caused and determined by a foregoing free act of Will; which doth not consist with the free acts arising without any cause, and being so contingent, as not to be fixed by any thing foregoing. So that this evasion must be given up, as not at all relieving, and as that which, instead of supporting this sort of liberty, directly destroys it.

And if it should be supposed, that the soul determines its own acts of Will some other way, than by a foregoing act of Will; still it will not help the cause of their liberty of Will. If it determines them by an act of the understanding, or some other power, then the Will does not determine itself; and so the selfdetermining power of the Will is given up. And what liberty is there exercised according to their own opinion of liberty, by the soul's being determined by something besides its own choice? The acts of the Will, it is true, may be directed, and effectually determined and fixed; but it is not done by the soul's own will and pleasure: There is no exercise at all of choice or will in producing the effect: And if Will and choice are not exercised in it, how is the liberty of the Will exercised in it?

So that let Arminians turn which way they please with their notion of liberty, consisting in the Will's determining its own acts, their notion destroys itself. If they hold every free act of Will to be determined by the soul's own free choice, or

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foregoing free act of Will; foregoing, either in the order of time, or nature; it implies that gross contradiction, that the first free act belonging to the affair, is determined by a free act which is before it. Or if they say that the free acts of the Will are determined by some other act of the soul, and not an act of Will or choice; this also destroys their notion of liberty, consisting in the acts of the Will being determined by the Will itself; or if they hold that the acts of the Will are determined by nothing at all that is prior to them, but that they are contingent in that sense, that they are determined and fixed by no cause at all; this also destroys their notion of liberty, consisting in the Will's determining its own acts.

This being the true state of the Arminian notion of liberty, it hence comes to pass, that the writers that defend it are forced into gross inconsistencies, in what they say upon this subject. To instance in Dr. Whitby; he, in his discourse on the freedom of the Will,* opposes the opinion of the Calvinists, who place man's liberty only in a power of doing what he will, as that wherein they plainly agree with Mr. Hobbes. And yet he himself mentions the very same notion of liberty, as the dictate of *the sense and common reason of mankind, and a rule laid down by the light of nature*, viz. that *liberty is a power of acting from ourselves, or* DOING WHAT WE WILL.† This is indeed, as he says, a thing agreeable to *the sense and common reason of mankind*; and therefore it is not so much to be wondered at, that he unawares acknowledges it against himself: For if liberty does not consist in this, what else can be devised that it should consist in? If it be said, as Dr. Whitby elsewhere insists, that it does not only consist in liberty of doing what we will, but also a liberty of willing without necessity; still the question returns, what does that liberty of willing without necessity consist in, but in a power of willing as we please, without being impeded by a contrary necessity? Or in other words, a liberty for the soul in its willing to act according to its own choice? Yea, this very thing the same author

* In his Book on the five Points, Second Edit. p. 350, 351, 352.
† Ibid. p. 325, 326.

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seems to allow, and suppose again and again, in the use he makes of sayings of the Fathers, whom he quotes as his vouchers. Thus he cites the words of Origen, which he produces as a testimony on his side :* *The soul acts by* HER OWN CHOICE, *and it is free for her to incline to whatever part* SHE WILL. And those words of Justin Martyr ; †*The doctrine of the Christians is this, that nothing is done or suffered according to fate, but that every man doth good or evil* ACCORDING TO HIS OWN FREE CHOICE. And from Eusebius these words : ‡*If fate be established, philosophy and piety are overthrown. All these things depending upon the necessity introduced by the stars, and not upon meditation and exercise* PROCEEDING FROM OUR OWN FREE CHOICE. And again, the words of Maccarius : §*God, to preserve the liberty of man's Will, suffered their bodies to die, that it might be* IN THEIR CHOICE *to turn to good or evil. They who are acted by the Holy Spirit, are not held under any necessity, but have liberty to turn themselves, and* DO WHAT THEY WILL *in this life,*

Thus, the doctor in effect comes into that very notion of liberty, which the Calvinists have ; which he at the same time condemns, as agreeing with the opinion of Mr. Hobbes, namely, *the soul's acting by its own choice, men's doing good or evil according to their own free choice, their being in that exercise which proceeds from their own free choice, having it in their choice to turn to good or evil, and doing what they will.* So that if men exercise this liberty in the acts of the Will themselves, it must be in exerting acts of Will as they will, or according to their own *free* choice ; or exerting acts of Will that proceed from their choice. And if it be so, then let every one judge whether this does not suppose a free choice going before the free act of Will, or whether an act of choice does not go before that act of the Will which proceeds from it.... And if it be thus with all free acts of the Will, then let every one judge, whether it will not follow that there is a free choice or Will going before the first free act of the Will ex-

* In his Book on the five Points, Second Edit. p. 342. † Ibid. p. 360.
‡ Ibid. p. 363. § Ibid. p. 369, 370.

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erted in the case. And then let every one judge, whether this be not a contradiction. And finally, let every one judge whether in the scheme of these writers there be any possibility of avoiding these absurdities.

If liberty consists, as Dr. Whitby himself says, in a man's doing what he will; and a man exercises this liberty, not only in external actions, but in the acts of the Will themselves; then so far as liberty is exercised in the latter, it consists in willing what he wills: And if any say so, one of these two things must be meant, either, 1. That a man has power to Will, as he does Will; because what he Wills, he Wills; and therefore has power to Will what he has power to Will. If this be their meaning, then this mighty controversy about freedom of the Will and selfdetermining power, comes wholly to nothing; all that is contended for being no more than this, that the mind of man does what it does, and is the subject of what it is the subject of, or that what is, is; wherein none has any controversy with them. Or, 2. The meaning must be, that a man has power to Will as he pleases or chooses to Will; that is, he has power by one act of choice, to choose another; by an antecedent act of Will to choose a consequent act; and therein to execute his own choice. And if this be their meaning, it is nothing but shuffling with those they dispute with, and baffling their own reason. For still the question returns, wherein lies man's liberty in that antecedent act of Will which chose the consequent act. The answer, according to the same principles, must be, that his liberty in this also lies in his willing as he would, or as he chose, or agreeably to another act of choice preceding that. And so the question returns *in infinitum* and the like answer must be made *in infinitum*: In order to support their opinion, there must be no beginning, but free acts of Will must have been chosen by foregoing free acts of Will in the soul of every man, without beginning; and so before he had a being, from all eternity.

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SECTION VI.

Concerning the Will's determining in Things which are perfectly indifferent *in the View of the Mind.*

A GREAT argument for selfdetermining power, is the supposed experience we universally have of an ability to determine our Wills, in cases wherein no prevailing motive is presented: The Will (as is supposed) has its choice to make between two or more things, that are perfectly equal in the view of the mind; and the Will is apparently altogether indifferent; and yet we find no difficulty in coming to a choice; the Will can instantly determine itself to one, by a sovereign power which it has over itself, without being moved by any preponderating inducement.

Thus the forementioned author of an *Essay on the Freedom of the Will*, &c. p. 25, 26, 27, supposes, "That there are many instances, wherein the Will is determined neither by present uneasiness, nor by the greatest apparent good, nor by the last dictate of the understanding, nor by any thing else, but merely by itself as a sovereign, selfdetermining power of the soul; and that the soul does not will this or that action, in some cases, by any other influence but because it will. Thus (says he) I can turn my face to the South, or the North; I can point with my finger upward, or downward. And thus, in some cases, the Will determines itself in a very sovereign manner, because it will, without a reason borrowed from the understanding; and hereby it discovers its own perfect power of choice, rising from within itself, and free from all influence or restraint of any kind." And in pages 66, 70, and 73, 74, this author very expressly supposes the Will in many cases to be determined by no motive at all, but to act altogether without motive, or ground of preference.....Here I would observe,

1. The very supposition which is here made, directly contradicts and overthrows itself. For the thing supposed, where-

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in this grand argument consists, is, that among several things the Will actually chooses one before another, at the same time that it is perfectly indifferent; which is the very same thing as to say, the mind has a preference, at the same time that it has no preference. What is meant cannot be, that the mind is indifferent before it comes to have a choice, or until it has a preference; or, which is the same thing, that the mind is indifferent until it comes to be not indifferent: For certainly this author did not think he had a controversy with any person in supposing this. And then it is nothing to his purpose, that the mind which chooses, was indifferent once; unless it chooses, remaining indifferent; for otherwise, it does not choose at all in that case of indifference, concerning which is all the question. Besides, it appears in fact, that the thing which this author supposes, is not that the Will chooses one thing before another, concerning which it is indifferent before it chooses; but also is indifferent when it chooses; and that its being otherwise than indifferent is not until afterwards, in consequence of its choice; that the chosen thing's appearing preferable and more agreeable than another, arises from its choice already made. His words are, (p. 30.) "Where the objects which are proposed, appear equally fit or good, the Will is left without a guide or director; and therefore must take its own choice by its own determination; it being properly a selfdetermining power. And in such cases the Will does as it were make a good to itself by its own choice, i. e. creates its own pleasure or delight in this self-chosen good. Even as a man by seizing upon a spot of unoccupied land, in an uninhabited country, makes it his own possession and property, and as such rejoices in it. Where things were indifferent before, the Will finds nothing to make them more agreeable, considered merely in themselves; but the pleasure it feels ARISING FROM ITS OWN CHOICE, and its perseverance therein. We love many things we have chosen, AND PURELY BECAUSE WE CHOSE THEM."

This is as much as to say, that we first begin to prefer many things, now ceasing any longer to be indifferent with respect to them, purely because we have preferred and chos-

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on them before. These things must needs be spoken inconsiderately by this author. Choice or preference cannot be before itself in the same instance, either in the order of time or nature: It cannot be the foundation of itself, or the fruit or consequence of itself. The very act of choosing one thing rather than another, is preferring that thing, and that is setting a higher value on that thing. But that the mind sets an higher value on one thing than another, is not, in the first place, the fruit of its setting a higher value on that thing.

This author says, p. 36, "The Will may be perfectly indifferent, and yet the Will may determine itself to choose one or the other." And again, in the same page, "I am entirely indifferent to either; and yet my Will may determine itself to choose." And again, "Which I shall choose must be determined by the mere act of my Will." If the choice is determined by a mere act of Will, then the choice is determined by a mere act of choice. And concerning this matter, viz. That the act of the Will itself is determined by an act of choice, this writer is express, in page 72. Speaking of the case, where there is no superior fitness in objects presented, he has these words: "There it must act by its own CHOICE, and determine itself as it PLEASES." Where it is supposed that the very determination, which is the ground and spring of the Will's act, is an act of choice and pleasure, wherein one act is more agreeable and the mind better pleased in it than another; and this preference and superior pleasedness is the ground of all it does in the case. And if so, the mind is not indifferent when it determines itself, but had rather do one thing than another, had rather determine itself one way than another. And therefore the Will does not act at all in indifference; not so much as in the first step it takes, or the first rise and beginning of its acting. If it be possible for the understanding to act in indifference, yet to be sure the Will never does; because the Will's beginning to act is the very same thing as its beginning to choose or prefer. And if in the very first act of the Will, the mind prefers something, then the idea of that thing preferred, does at that time preponderate, or prevail in the mind; or, which is the same thing,

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the idea of it has a prevailing influence on the Will. So that this wholly destroys the thing supposed, viz. That the mind can, by a sovereign power, choose one of two or more things, which in the view of the mind are, in every respect, perfectly equal, one of which does not at all preponderate, nor has any prevailing influence on the mind above another.

So that this author, in his grand argument for the ability of the Will to choose one of two or more things, concerning which it is perfectly indifferent, does at the same time, in effect, deny the thing he supposes, and allows and asserts the point he endeavors to overthrow; even that the Will, in choosing, is subject to no prevailing influence of the idea, or view of the thing chosen. And indeed it is impossible to offer this argument without overthrowing it; the thing supposed in it being inconsistent with itself, and that which denies itself. To suppose the Will to act at all in a state of perfect indifference, either to determine itself, or to do any thing else, is to assert that the mind chooses without choosing. To say that when it is indifferent, it can do as it pleases, is to say that it can follow its pleasure when it has no pleasure to follow. And therefore if there be any difficulty in the instances of two cakes, two eggs, &c. which are exactly alike, one as good as another; concerning which this author supposes the mind in fact has a choice, and so in effect supposes that it has a preference; it as much concerned himself to solve the difficulty, as it does those whom he opposes. For if these instances prove any thing to his purpose, they prove that a man chooses without choice. And yet this is not to his purpose; because if this is what he asserts, his own words are as much against him, and do as much contradict him, as the words of those he disputes against can do.

2. There is no great difficulty in shewing, in such instances as are alleged, not only that it must needs be so, that the mind must be influenced in its choice, by something that has a preponderating influence upon it, but also how it is so. A little attention to our own experience, and a distinct consideration of the acts of our own minds, in such cases, will be sufficient to clear up the matter.

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Thus, supposing I have a chessboard before me; and because I am required by a superior, or desired by a friend, or to make some experiment concerning my own ability and liberty, or on some other consideration, I am determined to touch some one of the spots or squares on the board with my finger; not being limited or directed in the first proposal, or my own first purpose, which is general, to any one in particular; and there being nothing in the squares, in themselves considered, that recommends any one of all the sixtyfour, more than another: In this case, my mind determines to give itself up to what is vulgarly called *accident*,* by determining to touch that square which happens to be most in view, which my eye is especially upon at that moment, or which happens to be then most in my mind, or which I shall be directed to by some other such like accident....Here are several steps of the mind's proceeding (though all may be done as it were in a moment) the first step is its general determination that it will touch one of the squares. The next step is another general determination to give itself up to accident, in some certain way; as to touch that which shall be most in the eye or mind at that time, or to some other such like accident. The third and last step is a particular determination to touch a certain individual spot, even that square, which, by that sort of accident the mind has pitched upon, has actually offered itself beyond others. Now it is apparent that in none of these several steps does the mind proceed in absolute indifference, but in each of them is influenced by a preponderating inducement. So it is in the first step; the mind's general determination to touch one of the sixtyfour spots: The mind is not absolutely indifferent whether it does so or no; it is induced to it, for the sake of making some experiment, or by the desire of a friend, or some other motive that prevails. So it is in the second step, the mind's determining to give it-

* I have elsewhere observed what that is which is vulgarly called *accident*; that it is nothing akin to the *Arminian* metaphysical notion of *contingence*, something not connected with any thing foregoing; but that it is something that comes to pass in the course of things, in some affair that men are concerned in, unforeseen, and not owing to their design.

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self up to accident, by touching that which shall be most in the eye, or the idea of which shall be most prevalent in the mind, &c. The mind is not absolutely indifferent whether it proceeds by this rule or no; but chooses it because it appears at that time a convenient and requisite expedient in order to fulfil the general purpose aforesaid. And so it is in the third and last step, it is determining to touch that individual spot which actually does prevail in the mind's view. The mind is not indifferent concerning this; but is influenced by a prevailing inducement and reason; which is, that this is a prosecution of the preceding determination, which appeared requisite, and was fixed before in the second step.

Accident will ever serve a man, without hindering him a moment, in such a case. It will always be so among a number of objects in view, one will prevail in the eye, or in idea beyond others. When we have our eyes open in the clear sunshine, many objects strike the eye at once, and innumerable images may be at once painted in it by the rays of light; but the attention of the mind is not equal to several of them at once; or if it be, it does not continue so for any time. And so it is with respect to the ideas of the mind in general: Several ideas are not in equal strength in the mind's view and notice at once; or at least, does not remain so for any sensible continuance. There is nothing in the world more constantly varying, than the ideas of the mind: They do not remain precisely in the same state for the least perceivable space of time; as is evident by this, that all perceivable time is judged and perceived by the mind only by the succession or the successive changes of its own ideas: Therefore while the views or perceptions of the mind remain precisely in the same state, there is no perceivable space or length of time, because no sensible succession.

As the acts of the Will, in each step of the forementioned procedure, do not come to pass without a particular cause, every act is owing to a prevailing inducement; so the accident, as I have called it, or that which happens in the unsearchable course of things, to which the mind yields itself, and by which it is guided, is not any thing that comes to pass

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without a cause; and the mind, in determining to be guided by it, is not determined by something that has no cause; any more than if it determined to be guided by a lot, or the casting of a die. For though the die's falling in such a manner be accidental to him that casts it, yet none will suppose that there is no cause why it falls as it does. The involuntary changes in the succession of our ideas, though the causes may not be observed, have as much a cause, as the changeable motions of the motes that float in the air, or the continual infinitely various, successive changes of the unevennesses on the surface of the water.

There are two things especially, which are probably the occasions of confusion in the minds of those who insist upon it, that the Will acts in a proper indifference, and without being moved by any inducement, in its determination in such cases as have been mentioned.

1. They seem to mistake the point in question, or at least not to keep it distinctly in view. The question they dispute about, is, Whether the mind be indifferent about the objects presented, one of which is to be taken, touched, pointed to, &c. as two eggs, two cakes, which appear equally good. Whereas the question to be considered, is, Whether the person be indifferent with respect to his own actions; whether he does not, on some consideration or other, prefer one act with respect to these objects before another. The mind in its determination and choice, in these cases, is not most immediately and directly conversant about the objects presented; but the acts to be done concerning these objects. The objects may appear equal, and the mind may never properly make any choice between them: But the next act of the Will being about the external actions to be performed, taking, touching, &c. these may not appear equal, and one action may properly be chosen before another. In each step of the mind's progress, the determination is not about the objects, unless indirectly and improperly, but about the actions, which it chooses for other reasons than any preference of the objects, and for reasons not taken at all from the objects.

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There is no necessity of supposing, that the mind does ever properly choose one of the objects before another; either before it has taken, or afterwards. Indeed the man chooses to take or touch one rather than another; but not because it chooses the thing taken, or touched; but from foreign considerations. The case may be so, that of two things offered, a man may, for certain reasons, choose and prefer the taking of that which he undervalues, and choose to neglect to take that which his mind prefers. In such a case, choosing the thing taken, and choosing to take, are diverse; and so they are in a case where the things presented are equal in the mind's esteem, and neither of them preferred. All that fact makes evident, is, that the mind chooses one action rather than another. And therefore the arguments which they bring, in order to be to their purpose, ought to be to prove that the mind chooses the action in perfect indifference, with respect to that action; and not to prove that the mind chooses the action in perfect indifference with respect to the object; which is very possible, and yet the Will not act without prevalent inducement, and proper preponderation.

2. Another reason of confusion and difficulty in this matter, seems to be, not distinguishing between a general indifference, or an indifference with respect to what is to be done in a more distant and general view of it, and a particular indifference, or an indifference with respect to the next immediate act, viewed with its particular and present circumstances. A man may be perfectly indifferent with respect to his own actions, in the former respect; and yet not in the latter. Thus, in the foregoing instance of touching one of the squares of a chessboard; when it is first proposed that I should touch one of them, I may be perfectly indifferent which I touch; because as yet I view the matter remotely and generally, being but in the first step of the mind's progress in the affair. But yet, when I am actually come to the last step, and the very next thing to be determined is which is to be touched, having already determined that I will touch that which happens to be most in my eye or mind, and my mind being now

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fixed on a particular one, the act of touching that, considered thus immediately, and in these particular present circumstances, is not what my mind is absolutely indifferent about.

SECTION VII.

Concerning the notion of Liberty of Will, *consisting in* Indifference.

WHAT has been said in the foregoing section, has a tendency in some measure to evince the absurdity of the opinion of such as place Liberty in Indifference, or in that equilibrium whereby the Will is without all antecedent determination or bias, and left hitherto free from any prepossessing inclination to one side or the other; that so the determination of the Will to either side may be entirely from itself, and that it may be owing only to its own power, and that sovereignty which it has over itself, that it goes this way rather than that.*

* Dr. Whitby, and some other *Arminians*, make a distinction of different kinds of freedom; one of God, and perfect spirits above; another of persons in a state of trial. The former Dr. Whitby allows to consist with necessity; the latter he holds to be without necessity: And this latter he supposes to be requisite to our being the subjects of praise or dispraise, rewards or punishments, precepts and prohibitions, promises and threats, exhortations and dehortations, and a covenant treaty. And to this freedom he supposes *Indifference* to be requisite. In his Discourse on the five points, p. 299, 300, he says, "It is a freedom (speaking of a freedom not only from coaction, but from necessity) requisite, as we conceive, to render us capable of trial or probation, and to render our actions worthy of praise or dispraise, and our persons of rewards or punishments." And in the next page, speaking of the same matter, he says, "Excellent to this purpose, are the words of Mr. Thorndike: *We say not that Indifference is requisite to all freedom, but to the freedom of a man alone in this state of travail and proficience: The ground of which is God's tender of a treaty, and conditions of peace and reconcilement to fallen man, together with those precepts and prohibitions, those promises and threats, those exhortations and dehortations, it is enforced with.*"

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But in as much as this has been of such long standing, and has been so generally received, and so much insisted on by *Pelagians*, *Semipelagians*, *Jesuits*, *Socinians*, *Arminians* and others, it may deserve a more full consideration. And therefore I shall now proceed to a more particular and thorough inquiry into this notion.

Now, lest some should suppose that I do not understand those that place Liberty in Indifference, or should charge me with misrepresenting their opinion, I would signify, that I am sensible, there are some, who, when they talk of the Liberty of the Will as consisting in Indifference, express themselves as though they would not be understood of the Indifference of the inclination or tendency of the Will, but of, I know not what, Indifference of the soul's power of willing; or that the Will, with respect to its power or ability to choose, is indifferent, can go either way indifferently, either to the right hand or left, either act or forbear to act, one as well as the other. However this seems to be a refining only of some particular writers, and newly invented, and which will by no means consist with the manner of expression used by the defenders of Liberty of Indifference in general. And I wish such refiners would thoroughly consider, whether they distinctly know their own meaning, when they make a distinction between Indifference of the soul as to its *power* or *ability* of willing or choosing, and the soul's Indifference as to the preference or choice itself; and whether they do not deceive themselves in imagining that they have any distinct meaning. The Indifference of the soul as to its ability or power to Will, must be the same thing as the Indifference of the state of the power or faculty of the Will, or the indifference of the state which the soul itself, which has that power or faculty, hitherto remains in, as to the exercise of that power, in the choice it shall by and by make.

But not to insist any longer on the abstruseness and inexplicableness of this distinction; let what will be supposed concerning the meaning of those that make use of it, thus much must at least be intended by *Arminians* when they talk of Indifference as essential to Liberty of Will, if they intend any thing, in any respect to their purpose, *viz.* That it is such

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an Indifference as leaves the Will not determined already; but free from, and vacant of predetermination, so far, that there may be room for the exercise of the *selfdetermining power* of the Will; and that the Will's freedom consists in, or depends upon this vacancy and opportunity that is left for the Will itself to be the determiner of the act that is to be the free act.

And here I would observe in the *first* place, that to make out this scheme of Liberty, the Indifference must be *perfect* and *absolute*; there must be a perfect freedom from all antecedent preponderation or inclination. Because if the Will be already inclined, before it exerts its own sovereign power on itself, then its inclination is not wholly owing to itself: If when two opposites are proposed to the soul for its choice, the proposal does not find the soul wholly in a state of Indifference, then it is not found in a state of Liberty for mere selfdetermination....The least degree of antecedent bias must be inconsistent with their notion of Liberty. For so long as prior inclination possesses the Will, and is not removed, it binds the Will, so that it is utterly impossible that the Will should act otherwise than agreeably to it. Surely the Will cannot act or choose contrary to a remaining prevailing inclination of the Will. To suppose otherwise, would be the same thing as to suppose, that the Will is inclined contrary to its present prevailing inclination, or contrary to what it is inclined to. That which the Will chooses and prefers, that all things considered, it preponderates and inclines to. It is equally impossible for the Will to choose contrary to its own remaining and present preponderating inclination, as it is to prefer contrary to its own present preference, or choose contrary to its own present choice. The Will, therefore, so long as it is under the influence of an old preponderating inclination, is not at Liberty for a new free act, or any act that shall now be an act of selfdetermination. The act which is a selfdetermined free act, must be an act which the Will determines in the possession and use of such a Liberty, as consists in a freedom from every thing, which, if it were there, would make it im-

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possible that the Will, at that time, should be otherwise than that way to which it tends.

If any one should say, there is no need that the Indifference should be perfect; but although a former inclination and preference still remain, yet, if it be not very strong and violent, possibly the strength of the Will may oppose and overcome it :....This is grossly absurd; for the strength of the Will, let it be ever so great, does not enable it to act one way, and not the contrary way, both at the same time. It gives it no such sovereignty and command, as to cause itself to prefer and not to prefer at the same time, or to choose contrary to its own present choice.

Therefore, if there be the least degree of antecedent preponderation of the Will, it must be perfectly abolished, before the Will can be at liberty to determine itself the contrary way. And if the Will determines itself the same way, it is not a free determination, because the Will is not wholly at Liberty in so doing: Its determination is not altogether from itself, but it was partly determined before, in its prior inclination; and all the freedom the Will exercises in the case, is in an increase of inclination, which it gives itself, over and above what it had by the foregoing bias; so much is from itself, and so much is from perfect Indifference. For though the Will had a previous tendency that way, yet as to that additional degree of inclination, it had no tendency. Therefore the previous tendency is of no consideration, with respect to the act wherein the Will is free. So that it comes to the same thing which was said at first, that as to the act of the Will, wherein the Will is free, there must be *perfect Indifference*, or *equilibrium*.

To illustrate this; if we should suppose a sovereign, self-moving power in a natural body, but that the body is in motion already, by an antecedent bias; for instance, gravitation towards the centre of the earth; and has one degree of motion already, by virtue of that previous tendency; but by its selfmoving power it adds one degree more to its motion, and moves so much more swiftly towards the centre of the earth than it would do by its gravity only: It is evident, that all that

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is owing to a selfmoving power in this case, is the additional degree of motion; and that the other degree of motion which it had from gravity, is of no consideration in the case, does not help the effect of the free selfmoving power in the least; the effect is just the same, as if the body had received from itself one degree of motion from a state of perfect rest. So if we should suppose a selfmoving power given to the scale of a balance, which has a weight of one degree beyond the opposite scale; and we ascribe to it an ability to add to itself another degree of force the same way, by its selfmoving power; this is just the same thing as to ascribe to it a power to give itself one degree of preponderation from a perfect equilibrium; and so much power as the scale has to give itself an overbalance from a perfect equipoise, so much selfmoving selfpreponderating power it has, and no more. So that its free power this way is always to be measured from perfect equilibrium.

I need say no more to prove, that if Indifference be essential to Liberty, it must be perfect Indifference; and that so far as the Will is destitute of this, so far it is destitute of that freedom by which it is its own master, and in a capacity of being its own determiner, without being in the least passive, or subject to the power and sway of something else, in its motions and determinations.

Having observed these things, let us now try whether this notion of the Liberty of Will consisting in indifference and equilibrium, and the Will's selfdetermination in such a state be not absurd and inconsistent.

And here I would lay down this as an axiom of undoubted truth; that every free act is done *in* a state of freedom, and not *after* such a state. If an act of the Will be an act wherein the soul is free, it must be exerted in a *state of freedom*, and in the *time of freedom*. It will not suffice, that the act immediately follows a state of Liberty; but Liberty must yet continue, and coexist with the act; the soul remaining in possession of Liberty. Because that is the notion of a free act of the soul, even an act wherein the soul uses or exercises Liberty. But if the soul is not, in the very time of the act, in

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the possession of Liberty, it cannot at that time be in the use of it.

Now the question is, whether ever the soul of man puts forth an act of Will, while it yet remains in a state of Liberty, in that notion of a state of Liberty, viz. as implying a state of Indifference, or whether the soul ever exerts an act of choice or preference, while at that very time the Will is in a perfect equilibrium, not inclining one way more than another. The very putting of the question is sufficient to shew the absurdity of the affirmative answer; for how ridiculous would it be for any body to insist, that the soul chooses one thing before another, when at the very same instant it is perfectly indifferent with respect to each! This is the same thing as to say, the soul prefers one thing to another, at the very same time that it has no preference. Choice and preference can no more be in a state of Indifference, than motion can be in a state of rest, or than the preponderation of the scale of a balance can be in a state of equilibrium. Motion may be the next moment after rest; but cannot coexist with it, in any, even the least part of it. So choice may be immediately after a state of Indifference, but has no coexistence with it; even the very beginning of it is not in a state of Indifference. And therefore if this be Liberty, no act of the Will, in any degree, is ever performed in a state of Liberty, or in the time of Liberty. Volition and Liberty are so far from agreeing together, and being essential one to another, that they are contrary one to another, and one excludes and destroys the other, as much as motion and rest, light and darkness, or life and death. So that the Will does not so much as begin to act in the time of such Liberty; freedom is perfectly at an end, and has ceased to be, at the first moment of action; and therefore Liberty cannot reach the action, to affect, or qualify it, or give it a denomination, or any part of it, any more than if it had ceased to be twenty years before the action began. The moment that Liberty ceases to be, it ceases to be a qualification of any thing. If light and darkness succeed one another instantaneously, light qualifies nothing after it is gone out, to make any thing lightsome or bright, any more at the first moment of

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perfect darkness, than months or years after. Life denominates nothing *vital* at the first moment of perfect death. So freedom, if it consists in, or implies Indifference, can denominate nothing free, at the first moment of preference or preponderation. Therefore it is manifest, that no Liberty of which the soul is possessed, or ever uses, in any of its acts of volition, consists in Indifference; and that the opinion of such as suppose, that Indifference belongs to the very essence of Liberty is to the highest degree absurd and contradictory.

If any one should imagine, that this manner of arguing is nothing but trick and delusion; and to evade the reasoning, should say, that the thing wherein the Will exercises its Liberty, is not in the act of choice or preponderation itself, but in determining itself to a certain choice or preference; that the act of the Will wherein it is free, and uses its own sovereignty, consists in its causing or determining the change or transition from a state of Indifference to a certain preference, or determining to give a certain turn to the balance, which has hitherto been even; and that this act the Will exerts in a state of Liberty, or while the Will yet remains in equilibrium, and perfect master of itself....I say, if any one chooses to express his notion of Liberty after this, or some such manner, let us see if he can make out his matters any better than before.

What is asserted is, that the Will, while it yet remains in perfect equilibrium, without preference, determines to change itself from that state, and excite in itself a certain choice or preference. Now let us see whether this does not come to the same absurdity we had before. If it be so, that the Will, while it yet remains perfectly indifferent, determines to put itself out of that state, and give itself a certain preponderation; then I would inquire, whether the soul does not determine this of choice; or whether the Will's coming to a determination to do so, be not the same thing as the soul's coming to a choice to do so. If the soul does not determine this of choice, or in the exercise of choice, then it does not determine it voluntarily. And if the soul does not determine it voluntarily, or of its own *Will*, then in what sense does its *Will* de-

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termine it? And if the Will does not determine it, then how is the *Liberty of the Will* exercised in the determination? What sort of Liberty is exercised by the soul in those determinations, wherein there is no exercise of choice, which are not voluntary, and wherein the Will is not concerned?....But if it be allowed, that this determination is an act of choice, and it be insisted on, that the soul, while it yet remains in a state of perfect Indifference, chooses to put itself out of that state, and to turn itself one way; then the soul is already come to a choice, and chooses that way. And so we have the very same absurdity which we had before. Here is the soul in a state of choice, and in a state of equilibrium, both at the same time: The soul already choosing one way, while it remains in a state of perfect Indifference, and has no choice of one way more than the other.....And indeed this manner of talking, though it may a little hide the absurdity in the obscurity of expression, is more nonsensical, and increases the inconsistence. To say, the free act of the Will, or the act which the Will exerts in a state of freedom and Indifference, does not imply preference in it, but is what the Will does in order to causing or producing a preference, is as much as to say, the soul chooses (for to will and to choose are the same thing) without choice, and prefers without preference, in order to cause or produce the beginning of a preference, or the first choice. And that is, that the first choice is exerted without choice, in order to produce itself.

If any, to evade these things, should own, that a state of Liberty, and a state of Indifference are not the same, and that the former may be without the latter; but should say, that Indifference is still *essential to* the freedom of an act of Will, in some sort, namely, as it is necessary to go immediately before it; it being essential to the freedom of an act of Will that it should directly and immediately arise out of a state of Indifference: Still this will not help the cause of *Arminian* Liberty, or make it consistent with itself. For if the act springs immediately out of a state of Indifference, then it does not arise from antecedent choice or preference. But if the act arises directly out of a state of Indifference, without

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any intervening choice to choose and determine it, then the act, not being determined by choice, is not determined by the Will; the mind exercises no free choice in the affair, and free choice and free Will have no hand in the determination of the act. Which is entirely inconsistent with their notion of the freedom of Volition.

If any should suppose, that these difficulties and absurdities may be avoided, by saying that the Liberty of the mind consists in a power to suspend the act of the Will, and so to keep it in a state of Indifference, until there has been opportunity for consideration; and so shall say that, however Indifference is not essential to Liberty in such a manner, that the mind must make its choice in a state of Indifference, which is an inconsistency, or that the act of Will must spring immediately out of Indifference; yet indifference may be essential to the liberty of acts of the Will in this respect, viz. That Liberty consists in a Power of the mind to forbear or suspend the act of Volition, and keep the mind in a state of Indifference for the present, until there has been opportunity for proper deliberation: I say, if any one imagines that this helps the matter, it is a great mistake: It reconciles no inconsistency, and relieves no difficulty with which the affair is attended.....For here the following things must be observed:

1. That this *suspending* of Volition, if there be properly any such thing, is itself an act of Volition. If the mind determines to suspend its act, it determines it voluntarily; it chooses, on some consideration, to suspend it. And this choice or determination, is an act of the Will: And indeed it is supposed to be so in the very hypothesis; for it is supposed that the Liberty of the Will consists in its Power to do this, and that its doing it is the very thing wherein the Will exercises its Liberty. But how can the Will exercise Liberty in it, if it be not an act of the Will? The Liberty of the Will is not exercised in any thing but what the Will does.

2. This determining to suspend acting is not only an act of the Will, but it is supposed to be the only free act of the Will; because it is said, that this is the thing wherein the Liberty of the Will consists....Now if this be so, then this is all

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the act of will that we have to consider in this controversy, about the Liberty of Will, and in our inquiries, wherein the Liberty of man consists. And now the forementioned difficulties remain: The former question returns upon us, viz. Wherein consists the freedom of the Will in those acts wherein it is free? And if this act of determining a suspension be the only act in which the Will is free, then wherein consists the Will's freedom with respect to this act of suspension? And how is Indifference essential to this act? The answer must be, according to what is supposed in the evasion under consideration, that the Liberty of the Will in this act of suspension, consists in a Power to suspend even this act, until there has been opportunity for thorough deliberation..... But this will be to plunge directly into the grossest nonsense: For it is the act of suspension itself that we are speaking of; and there is no room for a space of deliberation and suspension in order to determine whether we will suspend or no. For that supposes, that even suspension itself may be deferred: Which is absurd; for the very deferring the determination of suspension to consider whether we will suspend or no, will be actually suspending. For during the space of suspension, to consider, whether to suspend, the act is *ipso facto* suspended. There is no medium between suspending to act, and immediately acting; and therefore no possibility of avoiding either the one or the other one moment.

And besides, this is attended with ridiculous absurdity another way: For now it is come to that, that Liberty consists wholly in the mind's having Power to suspend its determination whether to suspend or no; that there may be time for consideration, whether it be best to suspend. And if Liberty consists in this only, then this is the Liberty under consideration: We have to inquire now, how Liberty with respect to this act of suspending a determination of suspension, consists in Indifference, or how Indifference is essential to it. The answer, according to the hypothesis we are upon, must be, that it consists in a Power of suspending even this last mentioned act, to have time to consider whether to suspend that. And then the same difficulties and inquiries return

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over again with respect to that; and so on for ever. Which if it would shew any thing, would shew only that there is no such thing as a free act. It drives the exercise of freedom back *in infinitum*; and that is to drive it out of the world.

And besides all this, there is a delusion, and a latent gross contradiction in the affair another way; in as much as in explaining how, or in what respect the Will is free with regard to a particular act of Volition, it is said that its Liberty consists in a Power to determine to suspend that act, which places Liberty not in that act of Volition which the inquiry is about, but altogether in another antecedent act. Which contradicts the thing supposed in both the question and answer. The question is, wherein consists the mind's Liberty in any particular act of Volition? And the answer, in pretending to shew wherein lies the mind's Liberty in that act, in effect says, it does not lie in that act, but in another, viz. a Volition to suspend that act. And therefore the answer is both contradictory, and altogether impertinent and beside the purpose. For it does not shew wherein the Liberty of the Will consists in the act in question; instead of that, it supposes it does not consist in that act, but in another distinct from it, even a Volition to suspend that act, and take time to consider it. And no account is pretended to be given wherein the mind is free with respect to that act, wherein this answer supposes the Liberty of the mind indeed consists, viz. the act of suspension, or of determining the suspension.

On the whole, it is exceedingly manifest, that the Liberty of the mind does not consist in Indifference, and that Indifference is not essential or necessary to it, or belonging to it, as the *Arminians* suppose; that opinion being full of absurdity and selfcontradiction.

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SECTION VIII.

Concerning the supposed Liberty of the Will, as opposite to all Necessity.

IT is a thing chiefly insisted on by *Arminians*, in this controversy, as a thing most important and essential in human Liberty, that volitions, or the acts of the Will, are contingent events; understanding contingence as opposite, not only to constraint, but to all necessity. Therefore I would particularly consider this matter. And

1. I would inquire, whether there is, or can be any such thing, as a volition which is contingent in such a sense, as not only to come to pass without any Necessity of constraint or coaction, but also without a *Necessity of consequence*, or an infallible connexion with any thing foregoing.

2. Whether, if it were so, this would at all help the cause of Liberty.

I. I would consider whether volition is a thing that ever does, or can come to pass, in this manner, contingently.

And here it must be remembered, that it has been already shewn, that nothing can ever come to pass without a cause, or reason why it exists in this manner rather than another; and the evidence of this has been particularly applied to the acts of the Will. Now if this be so, it will demonstrably follow, that the acts of the Will are never contingent, or without necessity in the sense spoken of; in as much as those things which have a cause, or reason of their existence, must be connected with their cause. This appears by the following considerations.

1, For an event to have a cause and ground of its existence, and yet not to be connected with its cause, is an inconsistence. For if the event be not connected with the cause, it is not dependent on the cause; its existence is as it were loose from its influence, and may attend it or may not; it being a mere contingence, whether it follows or attends the influ-

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ence of the cause, or not: And that is the same thing as not to be dependent on it. And to say the event is not dependent on its cause is absurd: It is, the same thing as to say, it is not its cause, nor the event the effect of it: For dependence on the influence of a cause is the very notion of an effect. If there be no such relation between one thing and another, consisting in the connexion and dependence of one thing on the influence of another, then it is certain there is no such relation between them as is signified by the terms *cause* and *effect*. So far as an event is dependent on a cause and connected with it, so much causality is there in the case, and no more. The cause does, or brings to pass no more in any event, than it is dependent on it. If we say the connexion and dependence is not total, but partial, and that the effect, though it has some connexion and dependence, yet it is not entirely dependent on it; that is the same thing as to say, that not all that is in the event is an effect of that cause, but that only a part of it arises from thence, and part some other way.

2. If there are some events which are not necessarily connected with their causes, then it will follow, that there are some things which come to pass without any cause, contrary to the supposition. For if there be any event which was not necessarily connected with the influence of the cause under such circumstances, then it was contingent whether it would attend or follow the influence of the cause, or no; it might have followed, and it might not, when the cause was the same, its influence the same, and under the same circumstances. And if so, why did it follow rather than not follow? There is no cause or reason of this. Therefore here is something without any cause or reason why it is, viz. the following of the effect on the influence of the cause, with which it was not necessarily connected. If there be not a necessary connexion of the effect on any thing antecedent, then we may suppose that sometimes the event will follow the cause, and sometimes not, when the cause is the same, and in every respect in the same state of circumstances. And what can be the cause and reason of this strange phenomenon, even this diversity, that in one instance, the effect should follow, in an-

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ther not? It is evident by the supposition, that this is wholly without any cause or ground. Here is something in the present manner of the existence of things, and state of the world that is absolutely without a cause; which is contrary to the supposition, and contrary to what has been before demonstrated.

3. To suppose there are some events which have a cause and ground of their existence, that yet are not necessarily connected with their cause, which is to suppose that they have a cause which is not their cause. Thus if the effect be not necessarily connected with the cause, with its influence and influential circumstances; then, as I observed before, it is a thing possible and supposable, that the cause may sometimes exert the same influence, under the same circumstances, and yet the effect not follow. And if this actually happens in any instance, this instance is a proof, in fact, that the influence of the cause is not sufficient to produce the effect. For if it had been sufficient, it would have done it. And yet, by the supposition, in another instance, the same cause, with perfectly the same influence, and when all circumstances which have any influence, were the same, it *was followed* with the effect. By which it is manifest, that the effect in this last instance was not owing to the influence of the cause, but must come to pass some other way. For it was proved before, that the influence of the cause was not sufficient to produce the effect. And if it was not sufficient to produce it, then the production of it could not be owing to that influence, but must be owing to something else, or owing to nothing. And if the effect be not owing to the influence of the cause, then it is not the cause; which brings us to the contradiction of a cause, and no cause, that which is the ground and reason of the existence of a thing, and at the same time is not the ground and reason of its existence, nor is sufficient to be so.

If the matter be not already so plain as to render any further reasoning upon it impertinent, I would say, that that which seems to be the cause in the supposed case, can be no cause; its power and influence having, on a full trial, proved insufficient to produce such an effect: And if it be not sufficient

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to produce it, then it does not produce it. To say otherwise, is to say, there is power to do that which there is not power to do. If there be in a cause sufficient power exerted, and in circumstances sufficient to produce an effect, and so the effect be actually produced at *one time*; these things all concurring, will produce the effect at *all times*. And so we may turn it the other way; that which proves not sufficient at one time, cannot be sufficient at another, with precisely the same influential circumstances. And therefore if the effect follows, it is not owing to that cause; unless the different time be a circumstance which has influence: But that is contrary to the supposition; for it is supposed that all circumstances that have influence, are the same. And besides, this would be to suppose the time to be the cause; which is contrary to the supposition of the other thing's being the cause. But if merely diversity of time has no influence, then it is evident that it is as much of an absurdity to say, the cause was sufficient to produce the effect at one time, and not at another; as to say, that it is sufficient to produce the effect at a certain time, and yet not sufficient to produce the same effect at the same time.

On the whole, it is clearly manifest, that every effect has a necessary connexion with its cause, or with that which is the true ground and reason of its existence. And therefore if there be no event without a cause, as was proved before, then no event whatsoever is contingent in the manner, that *Arminians* suppose the free acts of the Will to be contigent.

SECTION IX.

Of the Connexion *of the Acts of the Will with the Dictates of the* Understanding.

IT is manifest, that the acts of the Will are none of them contingent in such a sense as to be without all necessity, or so as not to be necessary with a necessity of consequence and

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Connexion; because every act of the Will is some way connected with the Understanding, and is as the greatest apparent good is, in the manner which has already been explained; namely, that the soul always wills or chooses that which, in the present view of the mind, considered in the whole of that view, and all that belongs to it, appears most agreeable. Because, as was observed before, nothing is more evident than that, when men act voluntarily, and do what they please, then they do what appears most agreeable to them; and to say otherwise, would be as much as to affirm, that men do not choose what appears to suit them best, or what seems most pleasing to them; or that they do not choose what they prefer. Which brings the matter to a contradiction.

As it is very evident in itself, that the acts of the Will have some Connexion with the dictates or views of the Understanding, so this is allowed by some of the chief of the Arminian writers; particularly by Dr. Whitby and Dr. Samuel Clark. Dr. Turnbull, though a great enemy to the doctrine of necessity, allows the same thing. In his Christian Philosophy, (p. 196) he with much approbation cites another philosopher, as of the same mind, in these words: "No man, (says an excellent philosopher) sets himself about any thing, but upon some view or other, which serves him for a reason for what he does; and whatsoever faculties he employs, the Understanding, with such light as it has, well or ill formed, constantly leads; and by that light, true or false, all her operative powers are directed. The Will itself, how absolute and incontrolable soever it may be thought, never fails in its obedience to the dictates of the Understanding. Temples have their sacred images; and we see what influence they have always had over a great part of mankind; but in truth, the ideas and images in men's minds are the invisible powers that constantly govern them; and to these they all pay universally a ready submission."

But whether this be in a just consistence with themselves, and their own notions of liberty, I desire may now be impartially considered.

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Dr. Whitby plainly supposes, that the acts and determinations of the Will always follow the Understanding's apprehension or view of the greatest good to be obtained, or evil to be avoided; or, in other words, that the determinations of the Will constantly and infallibly follow these two things in the Understanding: 1. The *degree of good* to be obtained, and evil to be avoided, proposed to the Understanding, and apprehended, viewed, and taken notice of by it. 2. The *degree of the Understanding's view*, notice or appehension of that good or evil; which is increased by attention and consideration..... That this is an opinion he is exceeding peremptory in (as he is in every opinion which he maintains in his controversy with the Calvinists) with disdain of the contrary opinion as absurd and selfcontradictory, will appear by the following words of his, in his Discourse on the Five Points.*

"Now, it is certain, that what naturally makes the Understanding to perceive, is evidence proposed, and apprehended, considered or adverted to: For nothing else can be requisite to make us come to the knowledge of the truth. Again, what makes the Will choose, is something approved by the Understanding; and consequently appearing to the soul as good..... And whatsoever it refuseth, is something represented by the Understanding, and so appearing to the Will, as evil. Whence all that God requires of us is and can be only this; to refuse the evil, and choose the good. Wherefore, to say that evidence proposed, apprehended and considered, is not sufficient to make the Understanding approve; or that the greatest good proposed, the greatest evil threatened, when equally believed and reflected on, is not sufficient to engage the Will to choose the good and refuse the evil, is in effect to say, that which alone doth move the Will to choose or to refuse, is not sufficient to engage it so to do; which being contradictory to itself, must of necessity be false. Be it then so, that we naturally have an aversion to the truths proposed to us in the gospel; that only can make us indisposed to attend to them, but cannot hinder our conviction, when we do apprehend them,

* Second Edit. p. 211, 212, 213.

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and attend to them. Be it, that there is also a renitency to the good we are to choose; that only can indispose us to believe it is, and to approve it as our chiefest good. Be it, that we are prone to the evil that we should decline; that only can render it the more difficult for us to believe it is the worst of evils. But yet, what we do really believe to be our chiefest good, will still be chosen; and what we apprehend to be the worst of evils, will, whilst we do continue under that conviction, be refused by us. It therefore can be only requisite, in order to these ends, that the Good Spirit should so illuminate our Understandings, that we, attending to, and considering what lies before us, should apprehend, and be convinced of our duty; and that the blessings of the Gospel should be so propounded to us, as that we may discern them to be our chiefest good; and the miseries it threateneth, so as we may be convinced that they are the worst of evils; that we may choose the one, and refuse the other."

Here let it be observed, how plainly and peremptorily it is asserted, that the greatest good proposed, and the greatest evil threatened, when equally believed and reflected on, is sufficient to engage the Will to choose the good and refuse the evil, and is that alone which doth move the Will to choose or to refuse; and that it is contradictory to itself, to suppose otherwise; and therefore must of necessity be false; and then what we do really believe to be our chiefest good, will still be chosen, and what we apprehend to be the worst of evils, will, whilst we continue under that conviction, be refused by us..... Nothing could have been said more to the purpose, fully to signify and declare, that the determinations of the Will must evermore follow the illumination, conviction and notice of the Understanding, with regard to the greatest good and evil proposed, reckoning both the degree of good and evil understood, and the degree of Understanding, notice and conviction of that proposed good and evil; and that it is thus necessarily, and can be otherwise in no instance: Because it is asserted, that it implies a contradiction, to suppose it ever to be otherwise.

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I am sensible the Doctor's aim in these assertions is against the Calvinists; to shew, in opposition to them, that there is no need of any physical operation of the Spirit of God on the Will, to change and determine that to a good choice, but that God's operation and assistance is only moral, suggesting ideas to the Understanding; which he supposes to be enough, if those ideas are attended to, infallibly to obtain the end. But whatever his design was, nothing can more directly and fully prove, that every determination of the Will, in choosing and refusing, is necessary; directly contrary to his own notion of the liberty of the Will. For if the determination of the Will, evermore, in this manner, follows the light, conviction and view of the Understanding, concerning the greatest good and evil, and this be that alone which moves the Will, and it be a contradiction to suppose otherwise; then it is necessarily so, the Will necessarily follows this light or view of the Understanding, and not only in some of its acts, but in every act of choosing and refusing. So that the Will does not determine itself in any one of its own acts; but all its acts, every act of choice and refusal depends on, and is necessarily connected with some antecedent cause; which cause is not the Will itself, nor any act of its own, nor any thing pertaining to that faculty, but something belonging to another faculty, whose acts go before the Will, in all its acts, and govern and determine them.

Here if it should be replied, that although it be true, that according to the Doctor, the final determination of the Will always depends upon, and is infallibly connected with the Understanding's conviction, and notice of the greatest good; yet the acts of the Will are not necessary; because that conviction and notice of the Understanding is first dependent on a preceding act of the Will, in determining to attend to, and take notice of the evidence exhibited; by which means the mind obtains that degree of conviction, which is sufficient and effectual to determine the consequent and ultimate choice of the Will; and that the Will, with regard to that preceding act, whereby it determines whether to attend or no, is not necessary; and that in this, the liberty of the Will consists, that

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when God holds forth sufficient objective light, the Will is at liberty whether to command the attention of the mind to it.

Nothing can be more weak and inconsiderate than such a reply as this. For that preceding act of the Will, in determining to attend and consider, still is an *act of the Will* (it is so to be sure, if the *liberty of the Will* consists in it, as is supposed) and if it be an act of the Will, it is an act of *choice or refusal*. And therefore, if what the Doctor asserts be true, it is determined by some antecedent light in the Understanding concerning the greatest apparent good or evil. For he asserts, it is that light *which alone doth move the Will to choose or refuse*. And therefore the Will must be moved by that in choosing to attend to the objective light offered in order to another consequent act of choice; so that this act is no less necessary than the other. And if we suppose another act of the Will, still preceding both these mentioned, to determine both, still that also must be an act of the Will, and an act of choice; and so must, by the same principles, be infallibly determined by some certain degree of light in the Understanding concerning the greatest good. And let us suppose as many acts of the Will, one preceding another, as we please, yet they are every one of them necessarily determined by a certain degree of light in the Understanding, concerning the greatest and most eligible good in that case; and so, not one of them free according to Dr. Whitby's notion of freedom. And if it be said, the reason why men do not attend to light held forth, is because of ill habits contracted by evil acts committed before, whereby their minds are indisposed to attend to, and consider the truth held forth to them by God, the difficulty is not at all avoided: Still the question returns, What determined the Will in those preceding evil acts? It must by Dr. Whitby's principles, still be the view of the Understanding concerning the greatest good and evil. If this view of the Understanding be *that alone which doth move the Will to choose or refuse*, as the Doctor asserts, then every act of *choice or refusal*, from a man's first existence, is moved and determined by this view; and this view of the Understanding, exciting and governing the act, must be before the

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act: And therefore the Will is necessarily determined, in every one of its acts, from a man's first existence, by a cause beside the Will, and a cause that does not proceed from, or depend on any act of the Will at all. Which at once utterly abolishes the Doctor's whole scheme of liberty of Will; and he at one stroke, has cut the sinews of all his arguments from the goodness, righteousness, faithfulness and sincerity of God in his commands, promises, threatenings, calls, invitations, expostulations; which he makes use of, under the heads of reprobation, election, universal redemption, sufficient and effectual grace, and the freedom of the Will of man; and has enervated and made vain all those exclamations against the doctrine of the *Calvinists*, as charging God with manifest unrighteousness, unfaithfulness, hypocrisy, fallaciousness, and cruelty; which he has over, and over, and over again, numberless times in his book.

Dr. Samuel Clark in his Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God,* to evade the argument to prove the necessity of volition, from its necessary Connexion with the last dictate of the Understanding, supposes the latter not to be diverse from the act of the Will itself. But if it be so, it will not alter the case as to the evidence of the necessity of the act of the Will. If the dictate of the Understanding be the very same with the determination of the Will or choice, as Dr. Clark supposes, then this determination is no *fruit* or *effect of choice*: And if so, no liberty of choice has any hand in it; as to volition or choice, it is necessary; that is, choice cannot prevent it. If the last dictate of the Understanding be the same with the determination of volition itself, then the existence of that determination must be necessary as to volition; in as much as volition can have no opportunity to determine whether it shall exist or no, it having existence already before volition has opportunity to determine any thing. It is itself the very rise and existence of volition. But a thing after it exists, has no opportunity to determine as to its own existence; it is too late for that.

would observe, that if it be so, and the Arminian notion of liberty consists in a selfdetermining power in the Understand-

* Edition. VI. p. 93.

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If liberty consists in that which *Arminians* suppose, viz. in the Will's determining its own acts, having free opportunity, and being without necessity; this is the same as to say, that liberty consists in the soul's having power and opportunity to have what determinations of the Will it pleases or chooses. And if the determinations of the Will, and the last dictates of the Understanding be the same thing, then liberty consists in the mind's having power to have what dictates of the Understanding it pleases, having opportunity to choose its own dictates of Understanding. But this is absurd; for it is to make the determination of choice prior to the dictate of Understanding, and the ground of it; which cannot consist with the dictate of Understanding's being the determination of choice itself.

Here is no way to do in this case, but only to recur to the old absurdity of one determination before another, and the cause of it; and another before that, determining that; and so on *in infinitum*. If the last dictate of the Understanding be the determination of the Will itself, and the soul be free with regard to that dictate, in the Arminian notion of freedom; then the soul before that dictate of its understanding exists, voluntarily and according to its own choice determines in every case, what that dictate of the Understanding shall be; otherwise that dictate, as to the Will, is necessary; and the acts determined by it must also be necessary. So that here is a determination of the mind prior to that dictate of the Understanding, an act of choice going before it, choosing and determining what that dictate of the Understanding shall be: And this preceding act of choice, being a free act of Will, must also be the same with another last dictate of the Understanding; and if the mind also be free in that dictate of Understanding, that must be determined still by another; and so on forever.

Besides, if the dictate of the Understanding, and determination of the Will be the same, this confounds the Understanding and Will, and makes them the same. Whether they be the same or no, I will not now dispute; but only ing, free of all necessity; being independent, undetermin

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ed by any thing prior to its own acts and determinations; and the more the Understanding is thus independent and sovereign over its own determinations the more free; then of course the freedom of the soul, as a moral agent, must consist in the independence of the Understanding on any evidence or appearance of things, or any thing whatsoever, that stands forth to the view of the mind, prior to the Understanding's determination. And what a sort of liberty is this! Consisting in an ability, freedom and easiness of judging, either according to evidence, or against it; having a sovereign command over itself at all times, to judge, either agreeably or disagreeably to what is plainly exhibited to its own view. Certainly it is no liberty that renders persons the proper subjects of persuasive reasoning, arguments, expostulations, and such like moral means and inducements. The use of which with mankind is a main argument of the Arminians, to defend their notion of liberty without all necessity. For according to this, the more free men are, the less they are under the government of such means, less subject to the power of evidence and reason, and more independent of their influence, in their determinations.

However whether the Understanding and Will are the same or no, as Dr. Clark seems to suppose, yet in order to maintain the Arminian notion of liberty without necessity, the free Will must not be determined by the Understanding, nor necessarily connected with the Understanding; and the further from such Connexion, the greater the freedom. And when the liberty is full and complete, the determinations of the Will must have no Connexion at all with the dictates of the Understanding. And if so, in vain are all applications to the Understanding, in order to induce to any free virtuous act; and in vain are all instructions, counsels, invitations, expostulations, and all arguments and persuasives whatsoever: For these are but applications to the Understanding, and a clear and lively exhibition of the objects of choice to the mind's view. But if, after all, the Will must be self-determined, and independent of the Understanding, to what purpose are things thus represented to the Understanding, in order to determine the choice?

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SECTION X.

Volition necessarily connected with the Influence of Motives; with particular Observations on the great Inconsistence of Mr. Cubb's *Assertions and reasonings, about the Freedom of the Will.*

THAT every act of the Will has some cause, and consequently (by what has been already proved) has a necessary connexion with its cause, and so is necessary by a necessity of connexion and consequence is evident by this that every act of the Will whatsoever is excited by some Motive: Which is manifest, because, if the Will or mind, in willing and choosing after the manner that it does, is excited so to do by no motive or inducement, then it has no end which it proposes to itself, or pursues in so doing; it aims at nothing, and seeks nothing. And if it seek nothing, then it does not go after any thing or exert any inclination or preference towards any thing: Which brings the matter to a contradiction; because for the mind to Will something, and for it to go after something by an act of preference and inclination, are the same thing.

But if every act of the Will is excited by a Motive, then that Motive is the cause of the act of the Will. If the acts of the Will are excited by motives, then Motives are the causes of their being excited; or, which is the same thing, the cause of their being put forth into act and existence. And if so, the existence of the acts of the Will is properly the effect of their motives. Motives do nothing as Motives or inducements, but by their influence; and so much as is done by their influence is the effect of them. For that is the notion of an effect, something that is brought to pass by the influence of another thing.

And if volitions are properly the effects of their Motives, then they are necessarily connected with their Motives.....

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Every effect and event being, as proved before, necessarily connected with that, which is the proper ground and reason of its existence. Thus it is manifest, that volition is necessary, and is not from any selfdetermining power in the Will: The volition, which is caused by previous Motive and inducement, is not caused by the Will exercising a sovereign power over itself, to determine, cause and excite volitions in itself. This is not consistent with the Will's acting in a state of indifference and equilibrium, to determine itself to a preference; for the way in which Motives operate, is by biasing the Will, and giving it a certain inclination or preponderation one way.

Here it may be proper to observe, that Mr. Chubb, in his Collection of Tracts on various subjects, has advanced a scheme of liberty, which is greatly divided against itself, and thoroughly subversive of itself; and that many ways.

I. He is abundant in asserting, that the Will, in all its acts, is influenced by Motive and excitement; and that this is the previous ground and reason of all its acts, and that it is never otherwise in any instance. He says, (p. 262) "No action can take place without some motive to excite it." And in page 263, "Volition cannot take place without some PREVIOUS reason or motive to induce it." And in page 310, "Action would not take place without some reason or Motive to induce it; it being absurd to suppose, that the active faculty would be exerted without some PREVIOUS reason to dispose the mind to action." So also page 257. And he speaks of these things, as what we may be absolutely certain of, and which are the foundation, the only foundation we have of a certainty of the moral perfections of God. Pages 252, 253, 254, 255, 261, 262, 263, 264.

And yet at the same time, by his scheme, the influence of Motives upon us to excite to action, and to be actually a ground of volition, is consequent on the volition or choice of the mind. For he very greatly insists upon it, that in all free actions, before the mind is the subject of those volitions, which Motives excite, it chooses to be so. It chooses, whether it will comply with the Motive, which presents itself in view, or not; and when various Motives are presented, it chooses

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which it will yield to, and which it will reject. So page 256, "Every man has power to act, or to refrain from acting agreeably with, or contrary to, any Motive that presents." Page 257, "Every man is at liberty to act, or refrain from acting agreeably with, or contrary to, what each of these Motives, considered singly, would excite him to. Man has power, and is as much at liberty to reject the Motive that does prevail, as he has power, and is at liberty to reject those Motives that do not." And so, page 310, 311, "In order to constitute a moral agent, it is necessary, that he should have power to act, or to refrain from acting, upon such moral Motives as he pleases." And to the like purpose in many other places..... According to these things, the Will acts first, and chooses or refuses to comply with the Motive, that is presented, before it falls under its prevailing influence: And it is first determined by the mind's pleasure or choice, what Motives it will be induced by, before it is induced by them.

Now, how can these things hang together? How can the mind first act, and by its act of volition and choice, determine what Motive shall be the ground and reason of its volition and choice? For this supposes the choice is already made, before the Motive has its effect; and that the volition is already exerted, before the Motive prevails, so as actually to be the ground of the volition; and makes the prevailing of the Motive, the consequence of the volition, which yet it is the ground of. If the mind has already chosen to comply with a Motive, and to yield to its excitement, it does not need to yield to it after this: For the thing is effected already, that the Motive would excite to, and the Will is beforehand with the excitement; and the excitement comes in too late, and is needless and in vain afterwards. If the mind has already chosen to yield to a Motive which invites to a thing, that implies, and in fact is a choosing the thing invited to; and the very act of choice is before the influence of the Motive which induces, and is the ground of the choice; the son is beforehand with the father that begets him: The choice is supposed to be the ground of that influence of the Motive, which very influence is supposed to be the ground of the choice....

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And so *vice versa*, the choice is supposed to be the consequence of the influence of the Motive, which influence of the Motive is the consequence of that very choice.

And besides, if the Will acts first towards the Motive before it falls under its influence, and the prevailing of the Motive upon it to induce it to act and choose, be the fruit and consequence of its act and choice, then how is the Motive a *previous ground and reason of the act and choice*, so that *in the nature of the thing, volition cannot take place without some previous reason and motive to induce it*; and that this act is consequent upon, and follows the Motive? Which things Mr. Chubb often asserts, as of certain and undoubted truth.... So that the very same motive is both previous and consequent, both before and after, both the ground and fruit of the very same thing!

II. Agreeable to the forementioned inconsistent notion of the Will's first acting towards the Motive, choosing whether it will comply with it, in order to its becoming a ground of the Will's acting, before any act of volition can take place, Mr. Chubb frequently calls Motives and excitements to the action of the Will, the passive ground or reason of that action: Which is a remarkable phrase; than which I presume there is none more unintelligible, and void of distinct and consistent meaning, in all the writings of Duns Scotus, or Thomas Aquinas. When he represents the Motive to action or volition as passive, he must mean....passive in that affair, or passive with respect to that action which he speaks of; otherwise it is nothing to his purpose, or relating to the design of his argument: He must mean, (if that can be called a meaning) that the Motive to volition, is first acted *upon* or *towards* by the volition, choosing to yield to it, making it a ground of action, or determining to fetch its influence from thence; and so to make it a previous ground of its own excitation and existence. Which is the same absurdity as if one should say, that the soul of man, or any other thing, should, previous to its existence, choose what cause it would come into existence by, and should act upon its cause, to fetch influence from thence, to bring it into being; and so its cause should be a passive ground of its existence!

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Mr. Chubb does very plainly suppose Motive or excitement to be the ground of the being of volition. He speaks of it as the ground or reason of the EXERTION of an act of the Will, p. 391, and 392, and expressly says, that *volition cannot* TAKE PLACE without some *previous ground or Motive to induce to it*, p. 363. And he speaks of the act as *from the Motive*, and FROM THE INFLUENCE *of the motive*, p. 352, and from *the influence that the Motive has on the man, for the* PRODUCTION *of an action*, p. 317. Certainly there is no need of multiplying words about this; it is easily judged, whether Motive can be the ground of volition's being exerted and taking place, so that the very production of it is from the influence of the Motive, and yet the Motive, before it becomes the ground of the volition, is passive, or acted upon by the volition. But this I will say, that a man, who insists so much on clearness of meaning in others, and is so much in blaming their confusion and inconsistence, ought, if he was able, to have explained his meaning in this phrase of passive ground of action, so as to shew it not to be confused and inconsistent.

If any should suppose, that Mr. Chubb, when he speaks of Motive as a passive ground of action, does not mean passive with regard to that volition which it is the ground of, but some other antecedent volition, (though his purpose and argument, and whole discourse, will by no means allow of such a supposition) yet it would not help the matter in the least. For, (1.) If we suppose there to be an act of volition or choice, by which the soul chooses to yield to the invitation of a Motive to another volition, by which the soul chooses something else; both these supposed volitions are in effect the very same. A volition, or choosing to yield to the force of a Motive inviting to choose something, comes to just the same thing as choosing the thing, which the Motive invites to, as I observed before. So that here can be no room to help the matter, by a distinction of two volitions. (2.) If the Motive be passive with respect, not to the same volition that the Motive excites to, but one truly distinct and prior; yet, by Mr. Chubb, that prior volition cannot take place, without a Motive or excitement, as 'a previous ground of its existence'

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For he insists, that it is absurd to suppose any volition should take place without some previous Motive to induce it. So that at last it comes to just the same absurdity: For if every volition must have a previous Motive, then the very first in the whole series must be excited by a previous Motive; and yet the Motive to that first volition is passive; but cannot be passive with regard to another antecedent volition, because by the supposition, it is the very first: Therefore if it be passive with respect to any volition, it must be so with regard to that very volition that it is the ground of, and that is excited by it.

III. Though Mr. Chubb asserts, as above, that every volition has some Motive, and that in the nature of the thing, no volition can take place without some Motive to induce it; yet he asserts, that volition does not always follow the strongest Motive; or, in other words, is not governed by any superior strength of the Motive that is followed, beyond Motives to the contrary, previous to the volition itself. His own words, p. 258, are as follow: "Though with regard to physical causes, that which is strongest always prevails, yet it is otherwise with regard to moral causes. Of these, sometimes the stronger, sometimes the weaker, prevails. And the ground of this difference is evident, namely, that what we call moral causes, strictly speaking, are no causes at all, but barely passive reasons of, or excitements to the action, or to the refraining from acting: Which excitements we have power, or are at liberty to comply with or reject, as I have shewed above." And so throughout the paragraph, he, in a variety of phrases, insists, that the Will is not always determined by the strongest Motive, unless by strongest we preposterously mean actually prevailing in the event; which is not in the Motive, but in the Will; so that the Will is not always determined by the Motive, which is strongest, by any strength previous to the volition itself. And he elsewhere does abundantly assert, that the Will is determined by no superior strength or advantage, that Motives have, from any constitution or state of things, or any circumstances whatsoever, previous to the actual determination of the Will. And indeed his whole discourse on human liberty implies it, his whole scheme is founded upon it.

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But these things cannot stand together....There is such a thing as a diversity of strength in Motives to choice previous to the choice itself. Mr. Chubb himself supposes, that they *do previously invite, induce, excite* and *dispose the mind to action.* This implies, that they have something in themselves that is *inviting*, some tendency to *induce* and *dispose* to volition previous to volition itself. And if they have in themselves this nature and tendency, doubtless they have it in certain limited degrees, which are capable of diversity; and some have it in greater degrees, others in less; and they that have most of this tendency, considered with all their nature and circumstances, previous to volition, are the strongest motives; and those that have least, are the weakest Motives.

Now if volition sometimes does not follow the Motive which is strongest, or has most previous tendency or advantage, all things considered, to induce or excite it, but follows the weakest, or that which as it stands previously in the mind's view, has least tendency to induce it; herein the Will apparently acts wholly without Motive, without any previous reason to dispose the mind to it, contrary to what the same author supposes. The act, wherein the Will must proceed without a previous Motive to induce it, is the act of preferring the weakest Motive. For how absurd is it to say, the mind sees previous reason in the Motive, to prefer that Motive before the other; and at the same time to supppose, that there is nothing in the Motive, in its nature, state, or any circumstances of it whatsoever, as it stands in the previous view of the mind, that gives it any preference; but on the contrary, the other Motive that stands in competition with it, in all these respects, has most belonging to it, that is inviting and moving, and has most of a tendency to choice and preference. This is certainly as much as to say, there is previous ground and reason in the Motive, for the act of preference, and yet no previous reason for it. By the supposition, as to all that is in the two rival Motives, which tends to preference, previous to the act of preference, it is not in that which is preferred, but wholly in the other: Because appearing superior strength, and all appearing preferableness is in

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that; and yet Mr. Chubb supposes, that the act of preference is from *previous ground and reason* in the Motive which is preferred. But are these things consistent? Can there be previous ground in a thing for an event that takes place, and yet no previous tendency in it to that event? If one thing follow another, without any previous tendency to its following, then I should think it very plain, that it follows it without any manner of previous reason, why it should follow.

Yea, in this, case, Mr. Chubb supposes, that the event follows an antecedent or a previous thing, as the ground of its existence, not only that has *no tendency* to it, but *a contrary tendency*. The event is the preference, which the mind gives to that Motive, which is weaker, as it stands in the previous view of the mind; the immediate antecedent is the view the mind has of the two rival Motives conjunctly; in which previous view of the mind, all the preferableness, or previous tendency to preference, is supposed to be on the other side, or in the contrary Motive; and all the unworthiness of preference, and so previous tendency to comparative neglect, rejection or undervaluing, is on that side which is preferred: And yet in this view of the mind is supposed to be the *previous ground, or reason* of this act of preference, *exciting it, and disposing the mind to it*. Which, I leave the reader to judge, whether it be absurd or not. If it be not, then it is not absurd to say, that the previous tendency of an antecedent to a consequent, is the ground and reason why that consequent does not follow; and the want of a previous tendency to an event, yea, a tendency to the contrary, is the true ground and reason why that event does follow.

An act of choice or preference is a comparative act, wherein the mind acts with reference to two or more things that are compared, and stand in competition in the mind's view. If the mind in this comparative act, prefers that which appears inferior in the comparison, then the mind herein acts absolutely without Motive, or inducement, or any temptation whatsoever. Then, if a hungry man has the offer of two sorts of food, both which he finds an appetite to, but has a stronger appetite to one than the other; and there be no

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circumstances or excitements whatsoever in the case to induce him to take either the one or the other, but merely his appetite: If in the choice he makes between them, he chooses that, which he has the least appetite to, and refuses that, to which he has the strongest appetite, this is a choice made absolutely without previous Motive, excitement, reason or temptation, as much as if he were perfectly without all appetite to either: Because his volition in this case is a comparative act, attending and following a comparative view of the food, which he chooses, viewing it as related to, and compared with the other sort of food, in which view his preference has absolutely no previous ground, yea, is against all previous ground and Motive. And if there be any principle in man, from whence an act of choice may arise after this manner, from the same principle, volition may arise wholly without Motive on either side. If the mind in its volition can go beyond Motive then it can go without Motive: For when it is beyond the Motive, it is out of the reach of the Motive, out of the limits of its influence, and so without Motive. If volition goes beyond the strength and tendency of Motive, and especially if it goes against its tendency, this demonstrates the independence of volition or Motive. And if so, no reason can be given for what Mr. Chubb so often asserts, even that *in the nature of things volition cannot take place without a Motive to induce it.*

If the Most High should endow a balance with agency or activity of nature, in such a manner, that when unequal weights are put into the scales, its agency could enable it to cause that scale to descend, which has the least weight, and so to raise the greater weight; this would clearly demonstrate, that the motion of the balance does not depend on weights in the scales, at least as much as if the balance should move itself, when there is no weight in either scale. And the activity of the balance which is sufficient to move itself against the greater weight, must certainly be more than sufficient to move it when there is no weight at all.

Mr. Chubb supposes, that the Will cannot stir at all without some Motive; and also supposes, that if there be a Motive to one thing, and none to the contrary, volition will infalli-

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bly follow that Motive.....This is virtually to suppose an entire dependence of the Will on Motives: If it were not wholly dependent on them, it could surely help itself a little without them, or help itself a little against a Motive, without help from the strength and weight of a contrary Motive. And yet his supposing that the Will, when it has before it various opposite Motives, can use them as it pleases, and choose its own influence from them, and neglect the strongest, and follow the weakest, supposes it to be wholly independent on Motives.

It further appears, on Mr. Chubb's supposition, that volition must be without any previous ground in any Motive, thus: If it be, as he supposes, that the Will is not determined by any previous superior strength of the Motive, but determines and chooses its own Motive, then when the rival Motives are exactly equal in strength and tendency to induce, in all respects, it may follow either; and may in such a case, sometimes follow one, sometimes the other.....And if so, this diversity which appears between the acts of the Will, is plainly without previous ground in either of the Motives; for all that is previously in the Motives, is supposed precisely and perfectly the same, without any diversity whatsoever. Now perfect identity, as to all that is previous in the antecedent, cannot be the ground and reason of diversity in the consequent. Perfect identity in the ground cannot be the reason why it is not followed with the same consequence. And therefore the source of this diversity of consequence must be sought for elsewhere.

And lastly, it may be observed, that however Mr. Chubb does much insist that no volition can take place without some Motive to induce it, which previously disposes the mind to it; yet, as he also insists that the mind, without reference to any previous superior strength of Motives, picks and chooses for its Motive to follow; he himself herein plainly supposes, that with regard to the mind's preference of one Motive before another it is not the Motive that disposes the Will, but the Will disposes itself to follow the Motive.

IV. Mr. Chubb supposes necessity to be utterly inconsistent with *agency*; and that to suppose a being to be an agent

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in that which is necessary, is a plain contradiction. P. 311, and throughout his discourses on the subject of liberty, he supposes, that necessity cannot consist with agency or freedom; and that to suppose otherwise, is to make liberty and necessity, action and passion, the same thing. And so he seems to suppose, that there is no action, strictly speaking, but volition; and that as to the effects of volition in body or mind, in themselves considered, being necessary, they are said to be free, only as they are the effects of an act that is not necessary.

And yet, according to him, volition itself is the *effect of volition*; yea, every act of free volition: And therefore every act of free volition must, by what has now been observed from him be necessary....That every act of free [illegible] itself the effect of volition, is abundantly supposed by him: [illegible] p. 341, he says, "If a man is such a creature as I have proved him to be, that is, if he has in him a power or liberty of doing either good or evil, and either of these is the subject of his own free choice, so that he might, IF HE HAD PLEASED have CHOSEN and done the contrary." Here he supposes, all that is good or evil in man is the effect of his choice; and so that his good or evil choice itself, is the effect of his pleasure or choice, in these words, *he might, if he had* PLEASED, *have chosen the contrary*. So in p. 356, "Though it be highly reasonable, that a man should always choose the greater good....yet he may if he PLEASE, CHOOSE otherwise." Which is the same thing as if he had said, he may, if he chooses, choose otherwise." And then he goes on..." that is, he may, *if he pleases, choose* what is good for himself," &c. And again in the same page, "The Will is not confined by the understanding, to any particular sort of good, whether greater or less; but is at liberty *to choose* what kind of good *it pleases*."....If there be any meaning in the last words, the meaning must be this, that *the Will is at liberty to choose what kind of good it chooses to choose*; supposing the act of choice itself determined by an antecedent choice. The liberty Mr. Chubb speaks of, is not only a man's having power to move his body agreeably to an antecedent act of choice, but to

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use, or exert the faculties of his soul. Thus, in p. 379, speaking of the faculties of his mind, he says, "Man has power, and is at liberty to neglect these faculties, to use them aright, or to abuse them, as he pleases." And that he supposes an act of choice, or exercise of pleasure, properly distinct from, and antecedent to those acts thus chosen, directing, commanding and producing the chosen acts, and even the acts of choice themselves, is very plain in p. 283. "He can *command his actions*; and herein consist his liberty; he can give or deny himself that pleasure as he pleases." And p. 377. If the actions of men are not the produce of a free choice, or election, but spring from a necessity of nature, he cannot in reason be the object of reward or punishment on their account. Whereas, if actions, whether good or evil, is the produce of Will or choice, so that a man in either case, had it in his power, at liberty to have CHOSEN the contrary, he is the proper object of reward or punishment, according as he CHOOSES to behave himself." Here, in these last words, he speaks of liberty of CHOOSING, according as he CHOOSES. So that the behavior which he speaks of as subject to his choice, is his choosing itself, as well as his external conduct consequent upon it. And therefore it is evident, he means not only external actions, but the acts of choice themselves, when he speaks of *all free actions, as the* PRODUCE *of free choice*. And this is abundantly evident in what he says in p. 372, 373.

Now these things imply a twofold great absurdity and inconsistence.

1. To suppose, as Mr. Chubb plainly does, that every free act of choice is *commanded by*, and is the *produce of free choice*, is to suppose the first free act of choice belonging to the case, yea, the first free act of choice that ever man exerted, to be the produce of an antecedent act of choice. But I hope I need not labor at all to convince my readers, that it is an absurdity to say, the very first act is the produce of another act that went before it.

2. If it were both possible and real, as Mr. Chubb insists, that every free act of choice were the produce or the effect of a free act of choice; yet even then, according to his prin-

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ciples, no one act of choice would be free, but every one necessary; because, every act of choice being the effect of a foregoing act, every act would be necessarily connected with that foregoing cause. For Mr. Chubb himself says, p. 389, "When the selfmoving power is exerted, it becomes the necessary cause of its effects." So that his notion of a free act, that is rewardable or punishable, is a heap of contradictions. It is a free act, and yet, by his own notion of freedom, is necessary; and therefore by him it is a contradiction to suppose it to be free. According to him, every free act is the produce of a free act; so that there must be an infinite number of free acts in succession, without any beginning, in an agent that has a beginning. And therefore here is an infinite number of free acts, every one of them free; and yet not one of them free, but every act in the whole infinite chain a necessary effect. All the acts are rewardable or punishable, and yet the agent cannot, in reason, be the object of reward or punishment, on account of any one of these actions. He is active in them all, and passive in none; yet active in none, but passive in all, &c.

V. Mr. Chubb does most strenuously deny, that Motives are causes of the acts of the Will; or that the moving principle in man is moved, or caused to be exerted by Motives.... His words, pages 388 and 389, are, "If the moving principle in man is MOVED, or CAUSED TO BE EXERTED, by something external to man, which all Motives are, then it would not be a selfmoving principle, seeing it would be moved by a principle external to itself. And to say, that a selfmoving principle is MOVED, or CAUSED TO BE EXERTED, by a cause external to itself, is absurd and a contradiction," &c. And in the next page, it is particularly and largely insisted, that Motives are causes in no case, that *they are merely passive in the production of action, and have no causality in the production of it; no causality, to be the cause of the exertion of the Will.*

Now I desire it may be considered, how this can possibly consist with what he says in other places. Let it be noted here,

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1. Mr. Chubb abundantly speaks of Motives as *excitements of the acts of the Will;* and says, that *Motives do excite volition, and induce it,* and that they are necessary to this end; that *in the reason and nature of things, volition cannot take place without Motives to excite it.* But now, if Motives *excite* the Will, they *move* it; and yet he says, it is absurd to say, the Will is moved by Motives. And again, (if language is of any significancy at all) if Motives excite volition, then they are the cause of its being excited; and to cause volition to be excited, is to cause it to be put forth or exerted. Yea, Mr. Chubb says himself, p. 317, Motive is necessary to the exertion of the active faculty. To excite, is positively to do something; and certainly that which does something, is the cause of the thing done by it. To create, is to cause to be created; to make, is to cause to be made; to kill, is to cause to be killed; to quicken, is to cause to be quickened; and *to excite,* is *to cause to be excited.* To excite, is to be a cause, in the most proper sense, not merely a negative occasion, but a ground of existence by positive influence. The notion of exciting, is exerting influence to cause the effect to arise or come forth into existence.

2. Mr. Chubb himself, page 317, speaks of Motives as the ground and reason of action BY INFLUENCE, and BY PREVAILING INFLUENCE. Now, what can be meant by a cause, but something that is the ground and reason of a thing by its influence, an influence that is prevalent and so effectual.

3. This author not only speaks of Motives as the ground and reason of action, by prevailing influence; but expressly of their influence as prevailing FOR THE PRODUCTION of an action, in the same page 317: Which makes the inconsistency still more palpable and notorious. The production of an effect is certainly the causing of an effect; and productive influence is causal influence, if any thing is; and that which has this influence prevalently, so as thereby to become the ground of another thing, is a cause of that thing, if there be any such thing as a cause. This influence, Mr. Chubb says, Motives have to produce an action; and yet, he says, it is absurd and a contradiction, to say they are causes.

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4. In the same page, he once and again speaks of Motives as disposing the agent to action, by their influence. His words are these: "As Motive, which takes place in the understanding, and is the product of intelligence, is NECESSARY to action, that is, to the EXERTION of the active faculty, because that faculty would not be exerted without some PREVIOUS REASON to DISPOSE the mind to action; so from hence it plainly appears, that when a man is said to be disposed to one action rather than another, this properly signifies the PREVAILING INFLUENCE that one Motive has upon a man FOR THE PRODUCTION of an action, or for the being at rest, before all other Motives, for the production of the contrary.... For as Motive is the ground and reason of any action, so the Motive that prevails, DISPOSES the agent to the performance of that action."

Now, if Motives dispose the mind to action, then they cause the mind to be disposed; and to cause the mind to be disposed is to cause it to be willing; and to cause it to be willing is to cause it to Will; and that is the same thing as to be the cause of an act of the Will. And yet this same Mr. Chubb holds it to be absurd, to suppose Motive to be a cause of the act of the Will.

And if we compare these things together, we have here again a whole heap of inconsistencies. *Motives are the previous ground and reason* of the acts of the Will; yea, the *necessary* ground and reason of *their exertion, without which they will not be exerted, and cannot, in the nature of things, take place*; and they do *excite* these acts of the Will, and do this by *a prevailing influence*; yea, *an influence which prevails for the production of the act* of the Will, and for *the disposing of the mind to it*; and yet it is *absurd* to suppose *Motive to be a cause* of an act of the Will, or that *a principle of Will is moved or caused to be exerted by it*, or that it has *any causality in the production of it*, or *any causality to be the cause of the exertion of the Will.*

A due consideration of these things which Mr. Chubb has advanced, the strange inconsistencies which the notion of liberty, consisting in the Will's power of selfdetermination void

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of all necessity, united with that dictate of common sense, that there can be no volition without a Motive, drove him into, may be sufficient to convince us, that it is utterly impossible ever to make that notion of liberty consistent with the influence of Motives in volition. And as it is in a manner selfevident, that there can be no act of Will, choice, or preference of the mind, without some Motive or inducement, something in the mind's view, which it aims at, seeks, inclines to, and goes after; so it is most manifest, there is no such liberty in the universe as Arminians insist on; nor any such thing possible, or conceivable.

SECTION XI.

The Evidence of GOD's certain Foreknowledge *of the Volitions of moral Agents.*

THAT the acts of the Wills of moral agents are not contingent events, in that sense, as to be without all necessity, appears by God's certain foreknowledge of such events.

In handling this argument, I would in the first place prove, that God has a certain foreknowledge of the voluntary acts of moral agents; and secondly, shew the consequence, or how it follows from hence, that the volitions of moral agents are not contingent, so as to be without necessity of connexion and consequence.

First, I am to prove, that God has an absolute and certain foreknowledge of the free actions of moral agents.

One would think, it should be wholly needless to enter on such an argument with any that profess themselves Christians: But so it is; God's certain foreknowledge of the free acts of moral agents, is denied by some that pretend to believe the scriptures to be the word of God; and especially of late. I therefore, shall consider the evidence of such a prescience in the Most High, as fully as the designed limits of this essay

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will admit of; supposing myself herein to have to do with such as own the truth of the Bible.

Arg. I. My first argument shall be taken from God's *prediction* of such events. Here I would, in the first place, lay down these two things as axioms.

(1.) If God does not foreknow, he cannot foretell such events; that is, he cannot peremptorily and certainly foretell them. If God has no more than an uncertain guess concerning events of this kind, then he can declare no more than an uncertain guess. Positively to foretell, is to profess to foreknow, or to declare positive foreknowledge.

(2.) If God does not certainly foreknow the future volitions of moral agents, then neither can he certainly foreknow those events which are consequent and dependent on these volitions. The existence of the one depending on the existence of the other; the knowledge of the existence of the one depends on the knowledge of the existence of the other; and the one cannot be more certain than the other.

Therefore, how many, how great, and how extensive soever the consequences of the volitions of moral agents may be; though they should extend to an alteration of the state of things through the universe, and should be continued in a series of successive events to all eternity, and should in the progress of things branch forth into an infinite number of series, each of them going on in an endless line or chain of events; God must be as ignorant of all these consequences, as he is of the volitions whence they first take their rise: All these events, and the whole state of things depending on them, how important, extensive and vast soever, must be hid from him.

These positions being such as, I suppose, none will deny, I now proceed to observe the following things.

1. Men's moral conduct and qualities, their virtues and vices, their wickedness and good practice, things rewardable and punishable, have often been foretold by God. Pharaoh's moral conduct, in refusing to obey God's command, in letting his people go, was foretold. God says to Moses, Exod. iii. 19. "I am sure, that the king of Egypt will not let you go."

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Here God professes not only to guess at, but to know Pharaoh's future disobedience. In chap. vii. 4, God says, *but Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that I may lay mine hand upon Egypt*, &c. And chap. ix. 30, Moses says to Pharaoh, *as for thee, and thy servants I KNOW that ye will not fear the Lord.* See also chap. xi. 9....The moral conduct of Josiah, by name, in his zealously exerting himself in opposition to idolatry, in particular acts of his, was foretold above three hundred years before he was born and the prophecy sealed by a miracle, and renewed and confirmed by the words of a second prophet, as what surely would not fail, 1 Kings xiii. 1....6, 32. This prophecy was also in effect a prediction of the moral conduct of the people, in upholding their schismatical and idolatrous worship until that time, and the idolatry of those priests of the high places, which it is foretold Josiah should offer upon that altar of Bethel....Micaiah foretold the foolish and sinful conduct of Ahab, in refusing to hearken to the word of the Lord by him, and choosing rather to hearken to the false prophets, in going to Ramoth Gilead to his ruin, 1 Kings xxi. 20....22. The moral conduct of Hazael was foretold, in that cruelty he should be guilty of; on which Hazael says, *What, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing!* The prophet speaks of the event as what he knew, and not what he conjectured, 2 Kings viii. 12. *I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: Thou wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child.* The moral conduct of Cyrus is foretold, long before he had a being, in his mercy to God's people, and regard to the true God, in turning the captivity of the Jews, and promoting the building of the Temple, Isaiah xliv. 28. xlv. 13. Compare 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23, and Ezra i. 1....4. How many instances of the moral conduct of the *Kings of the North and South*, particular instances of the wicked behavior of the Kings of Syria and Egypt, are foretold in the xith chapter of Daniel? Their corruption, violence, robbery, treachery and lies. And particularly, how much is foretold of the horrid wickedness of Antiochus Epiphanes, called there a *vile person*, instead of Epiphanes, or illustrious. In that chapter, and also in chap. viii. verses 9.

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14, 23, to the end, are foretold his flattery, deceit and lies, his having *his heart set to do mischief*, and set *against the holy covenant*, his *destroying and treading under foot the holy people*, in a marvellous manner, his *having indignation against the holy covenant, setting his heart against it*, and *conspiring against it*, his *polluting the sanctuary of strength, treading it under foot, taking away the daily sacrifice, and placing the abomination that maketh desolate*; his great pride, *magnifying himself against God*, and *uttering marvellous blasphemies against him*, until God in *indignation should destroy him*. Withal, the moral conduct of the Jews, on occasion of his persecution, is predicted. It is foretold, that *he should corrupt many by flatteries*, chap. xi. 32....34. But that others should behave with a glorious constancy and fortitude in opposition to him, ver. 32. And that some good men should fall and repent, ver. 35. Christ foretold Peter's sin, in denying his Lord, with its circumstances, in a peremptory manner. And so that great sin of Judas, in betraying his master, and its dreadful and eternal punishment in hell, was foretold in the like positive manner, Matth. xxvi. 21....25, and parallal places in the other Evangelists.

2. Many events have been foretold by God, which were consequent and dependent on the moral conduct of particular persons, and were accomplished, either by their virtuous or vicious actions.....Thus, the children of Israel's going down into Egypt to dwell there, was foretold to Abraham, Gen. xv. which was brought about by the wickedness of Joseph's brethren in selling him, and the wickedness of Joseph's mistress, and his own signal virtue in resisting her temptation. The accomplishment of the thing prefigured in Joseph's dream, depended on the same moral conduct. Jotham's parable and prophecy, Judges ix. 15....20, was accomplished by the wicked conduct of Abimelech, and the men of Shechem. The prophecies against the house of Eli, 1 Sam. chap. ii. and iii. were accomplished by the wickedness of Doeg the Edomite, in accusing the priests; and the great impiety, and extreme cruelty of Saul in destroying the priests at Nob, 1 Sam. xxii. Nathan's prophecy against David, 2 Sam. xii. 11, 12, was fulfilled by the horrible wickedness of Absalom, in rebelling

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against his father, seeking his life and lying with his concubines in the sight of the sun. The prophecy against Solomon, 1 Kings xi. 11...13, was fulfilled by Jeroboam's rebellion and usurpation, which are spoken of as his wickedness, 2 Chron. xiii. 5, 6, compare verse 18. The prophecy against Jeroboam's family, 1 Kings xiv. was fulfilled by the conspiracy, treason, and cruel murders of Baasha. 1 Kings xv. 27, &c. The predictions of the prophet Jehu against the house of Baasha, 1 Kings xvi. at the beginning, were fulfilled by the treason and parricide of Zimri, 1 Kings xvi. 9, 13, 20.

3. How often has God foretold the future moral conduct of nations and people, of numbers, bodies, and successions of men: With God's judicial proceedings, and many other events consequent and dependent on their virtues and vices; which could not be foreknown, if the volitions of men, wherein they acted as *moral agents*, had not been foreseen? The future cruelty of the Egyptians in oppressing Israel, and God's judging and punishing them for it, was foretold long before it came to pass, Gen. xv. 13, 14. The continuance of the iniquity of the Amorites, and the increase of it until it *should be full*, and they ripe for destruction, was foretold above four hundred years beforehand, Gen. xv. 16. Acts vii. 6, 7. The prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the land of Judah, were absolute; 2 Kings xx. 17...19, chap. xxii. 15, to the end. It was foretold in Hezekiah's time, and was abundantly insisted on in the book of the prophet Isaiah, who wrote nothing after Hezekiah's days. It was foretold in Josiah's time, in the beginning of a great reformation, 2 Kings xxii. And it is manifest by innumerable things in the predictions of the prophets, relating to this event, its time, its circumstances, its continuance and end; the return from the captivity, the restoration of the temple, city and land, and many circumstances and consequences of *that*; I say, these shew plainly, that the prohecies of this great event were *absolute*. And yet this event was connected with, and dependent on two things in men's moral conduct; First, the injurious rapine and violence of the king of Babylon and his people, as the efficient cause; which God often speaks of as what he

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highly resented, and would severely punish; and 2dly. the final obstinacy of the Jews. That great event is often spoken of as suspended on this, Jer. iv. 1, and v. 1. vii. 1....7. xi. 1....6. xvii. 24, to the end, xxv. 1....7. xxvi. 1....8, 13, and xxxviii. 17, 18. Therefore this destruction and captivity could not be foreknown, unless such a moral conduct of the Chaldeans and Jews had been foreknown. And then it was foretold, that the people *should be finally obstinate*, to the destruction and utter desolation of the city and land, Isa. vi. 9....11. Jer. i. 18, 19. vii. 27....29. Ezek. iii. 7, and xxiv. 13, 14.

The final obstinacy of those Jews who were left in the land of Israel, in their idolatry and rejection of the true God was foretold, by God, and the prediction confirmed with an oath, Jer. xliv. 26, 27. And God tells the people, Isa. xlviii. 3, 4....8, that he had predicted those things which should be consequent on their treachery and obstinacy, because he knew they would be obstinate, and that he had declared these things beforehand for their conviction of his being the only true God, &c.

The destruction of Babylon, with many of the circumstances of it, was foretold, as the judgment of God for the exceeding pride and haughtiness of the heads of that monarchy, Nebuchadnezzar, and his successors, and their wickedly destroying other nations and particularly for their exalting themselves against the true God and his people, before any of these monarchs had a being; Isa. chap. xiii. xiv. xlvii: Compare Hab. ii. 5, to the end, and Jer. chap. l. and li. That Babylon's destruction was to be a *recompence, according to the works of their own hands*, appears by Jer. xxv. 14. The immorality which the people of Babylon, and particularly her princes and great men, were guilty of, that very night that the city was destroyed, their revelling and drunkenness at Belshazzer's idolatrous feast, was foretold, Jer. li. 39, 57.

The return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity is often very particularly foretold with many circumstances, and the promises of it are very peremptory; Jer. xxxi. 35....40, and xxxii. 6....15, 41....44, and xxxiii. 24....26. And the very time of their return was prefixed; Jer. xxv. 11, 12, and xxix. 10, 11. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. Ezek. iv. 6, and Dan. ix. 2. And

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yet the prophecies represent their return as consequent on their repentance. And their repentance itself is very expressly and particularly foretold, Jer. xxix. 12, 13, 14. xxxi. 8, 9, 18....31. l. 4, 5, Ezek. vi. 8, 9, 10. vii. 16. xiv. 22, 23, and xx. 43, 44.

It was foretold under the Old Testament, that the Messiah should suffer greatly through the malice and cruelty of men; as is largely and fully set forth, Psal. xxii. applied to Christ in the New Testament, Matth. xxvii. 35, 43. Luke xxiii. 34. John xix. 24. Heb. ii. 12. And likewise in Psal. lxix. which, it is also evident by the New Testament, is spoken of Christ; John ii. 17. xv. 25. &c. and Rom. xv. 3. Matth. xxvii. 34, 48. Mark xv. 23. John xix. 29. The same thing is also foretold, Isa. liii. and l. 6, and Mic. v. 1. This cruelty of men was their sin, and what they acted as moral agents. It was foretold, that there should be an union of Heathen and Jewish rulers against Christ, Psal. ii. 1, 2, compared with Acts iv. 25—28. It was foretold, that the Jews should generally reject and despise the Messiah, Isa. xlix. 5, 6, 7, and liii. 1....3. Psal. xxii 6, 7, and lxix. 4, 8, 19, 20. And it was foretold, that the body of that nation should be rejected in the Messiah's days, from being God's people, for their obstinacy in sin; Isa. xlix. 4....7. and viii. 14, 15, 16, compared with Rom. ix. 33, and Isa, lxv. at the beginning, compared with Rom. x. 20, 21. It was foretold, that Christ should be rejected by the chief priests and rulers among the Jews, Psal. cxviii. 22, compared with Matth. xxi. 42. Acts iv. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 4, 7.

Christ himself foretold his being delivered into the hands of the elders, chief priests and scribes, and his being cruelly treated by them, and condemned to death; and that he, by them, should be *delivered to the Gentiles*; and that he should be *mocked* and *scourged* and *crucified*, (Matth. xvi. 21, and xx. 17....19. Luke ix. 22. John viii. 28) and that the people should be concerned in, and consenting to his death, (Luke xx. 13,...18,) especially the inhabitants of Jerusalem; Luke xiii. 33....35. He foretold, that the disciples should all be offended because of Him that night that he was betray-

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ed, and should forsake him; Matth. xxvi. 31. John xvi. 32. He foretold, that he should be rejected of that generation, even the body of the people, and that they should continue obstinate, to their ruin; Matth. xii. 45. xxi. 33—42. and xxii. 1—7. Luke xiv. 16, 21, 24. xvii. 25. xix. 14, 27, 41—44. xx. 13....18.

As it was foretold in both Old Testament and New, that the Jews should reject the Messiah, so it was foretold that the Gentiles should receive Him, and so be admitted to the privileges of God's people; in places too many to be now particularly mentioned. It was foretold in the Old Testament, that the Jews should envy the Gentiles on this account; Deut. xxxii. 21, compared with Rom. x. 19. Christ himself often foretold, that the Gentiles would embrace the true religion, and become his followers and people; Matth. viii. 10, 11, 12. xxi. 41—43, and xxii. 8—10. Luke xiii. 28. xiv. 16—24, and xx. 16. John x. 16. He also foretold the Jews' envy of the Gentiles on this occasion; Matth. xx. 12—16. Luke xv. 26, to the end. He foretold, that they should continue in this opposition and envy, and should manifest it in cruel persecutions of his followers, to their utter destruction; Matth. xxi. 33—42. xxii. 6, and xxiii. 34—39. Luke xi. 49...51. The Jews obstinacy is also foretold, Acts xxii. 18. Christ often foretold the great persecutions his followers should meet with, both from Jews and Gentiles; Matth. x. 16, to 18, 21, 22, 34—36, and xxiv. 9. Mark xiii. 9. Luke x. 3. xii. 11, 49—53, and xxi. 12,16, 17. John xv. 18—21, and xvi. 1—4. He foretold the martyrdom of particular persons; Matth. xx. 23. John xiii. 36, and xxi. 18, 19, 22. He foretold the great success of the Gospel in the city of Samaria, as near approaching; which afterwards was fulfilled by the preaching of Philip, John iv. 35—38. He foretold the rising of many deceivers after his departure, Matth. xxiv. 4, 5, 11, and the apostasy of many of his professed followers; Matth. xxiv. 10...12.

The persecutions, which the Apostle Paul was to meet with in the world, were foretold; Acts ix. 16. xx. 23, and xxi. 11. The apostle says to the Christian Ephesians, Acts.

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xx. 29, 30, *I know that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock; also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.* The apostle says, He knew this; but he did not know it, if God did not know the future actions of moral agents.

4. Unless God foreknows the future actions of moral agents, all the prophecies we have in Scripture concerning the great Antichristian apostasy; the rise, reign, wicked qualities, and deeds of the man of sin, and his instruments and adherents; the extent and long continuance of his dominion, his influence on the minds of princes and others, to corrupt them, and draw them away to idolatry, and other foul vices; his great and cruel persecutions; the behavior of the saints under these great temptations, &c. &c. I say, unless the volitions of moral agents are foreseen, all these prophecies are uttered without knowing the things foretold.

The predictions relating to this great apostasy are all of a moral nature, relating to men's virtues and vices, and their exercises, fruits and consequences, and events depending on them; and are very particular; and most of them often repeated, with many precise characteristics, descriptions, and limitations of qualities, conduct, influence, effects, extent, duration, periods, circumstances, final issue, &c. which it would be tedious to mention particularly. And to suppose, that all these are predicted by God, without any certain knowledge of the future moral behavior of free Agents, would be to the utmost degree absurd.

5. Unless God foreknows the future acts of men's wills, and their behavior as moral Agents, all those great things which are foretold both in the Old Testament and the New, concerning the erection, establishment and universal extent of the kingdom of the Messiah, were predicted and promised while God was in ignorance whether any of these things would come to pass or no, and did but guess at them. For that kingdom is not of this world, it does not consist in things external, but is within men, and consists in the dominion of virtue in their hearts, in righteousness, and peace, and joy in

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the Holy Ghost; and in these things made manifest in practice, to the praise and glory of God. The Messiah came to save men from their sins, and deliver them from their spiritual enemies; that they might serve him in righteousness and holiness before him: He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." And therefore his success consists in gaining men's hearts to virtue, in their being made God's willing people in the day of his power. His conquest of his enemies consists in his victory over men's corruptions and vices. And such a victory, and such a dominion is often expressly foretold: That his kingdom should fill the earth; that all people, nations and languages should serve and obey him; and so that all nations should go up to the mountain of the house of the Lord, that he might teach them his ways, and that they might walk in his paths; and that all men should be drawn to Christ, and the earth be full of the knowledge of the Lord (by which, in the style of Scripture, is meant true virtue and religion) as the waters cover the seas; that God's law should be put into men's inward parts, and written in their hearts; and that God's people should be all righteous, &c. &c.

A very great part of the prophecies of the Old Testament is taken up in such predictions as these. And here I would observe, that the prophecies of the universal prevalence of the kingdom of the Messiah, and true religion of Jesus Christ, are delivered in the most peremptory manner, and confirmed by the oath of God, Isa. xlv. 22, to the end, "Look to me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. I have SWORN by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto Me every knee shall bow; and every tongue shall swear. SURELY, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: Even to Him shall men come," &c. But here this peremptory declaration, and great oath of the Most High, are delivered with such mighty solemnity, to things which God did not know, if he did not certainly foresee the volitions of moral agents.

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And all the predictions of Christ and his apostles, to the like purpose, must be without knowledge; as those of our Saviour comparing the kingdom of God to a grain of mustard seed, growing exceeding great, from a small beginning; and to leaven, hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened, &c. And the prophecies in the epistles concerning the restoration of the nation of the Jews to the true church of God, and the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles; and the prophecies in all the Revelation concerning the glorious change in the moral state of the world of mankind, attending the destruction of Antichrist, the kingdoms of the world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and its being granted to the church to be arrayed in that fine linen, white and clean, which is the righteousness of saints, &c.

Corol. 1. Hence that great promise and oath of God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, so much celebrated in scripture, both in the Old Testament and New, namely, *That in their seed all the nations and families of the earth should be blessed*, must have been made on uncertainties, if God does not certainly foreknow the volitions of moral agents. For the fulfilment of this promise consists in that success of Christ in the work of redemption, and that setting up of his spiritual kingdom over the nations of the world, which has been spoken of. Men are blessed in Christ no otherwise than as they are brought to acknowledge Him, trust in Him, love and serve Him, as is represented and predicted in Psal. lxxii. 11. "All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him." With verse 17. "Men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed." This oath to Jacob and Abraham is fulfilled in subduing men's iniquities; as is implied in that of the prophet Micah, chap. vii. 19, 20.

Corol. 2. Hence also it appears, that the first gospel promise that ever was made to mankind, that great prediction of the salvation of the Messiah, and His victory over Satan, made to our first parents, Gen. iii. 15, if there be no certain prescience of the volitions of moral agents, must have had no better foundation than conjecture. For Christ's victory over Satan consists in men's being saved from sin, and in the vic-

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tory of virtue and holiness, over that vice and wickedness, which Satan, by his temptation has introduced, and wherein his kingdom consists.

6. If it be so, that God has not a prescience of the future actions of moral agents, it will follow, that the prophecies of Scripture in general are without foreknowledge. For scripture prophecies, almost all of them, if not universally without any exception, are either predictions of the actings and behavior of moral agents, or of events depending on them, or some way connected with them; judicial dispensations, judgments on men for their wickedness, or rewards of virtue and righteousness, remarkable manifestations of favor to the righteous or manifestations of sovereign mercy to sinners, forgiving their iniquities, and magnifying the riches of divine Grace; or dispensations of Providence, in some respect or other, relating to the conduct of the subjects of God's moral government, wisely adapted thereto; either providing for what should be in a future state of things, through the volitions and voluntary actions of moral agents, or consequent upon them, and regulated and ordered according to them. So that all events that are foretold, are either moral events, or other events which are connected with, and accommodated to moral events.

That the predictions of scripture in general must be without knowledge, if God does not foresee the volitions of men, will further appear, if it be considered, that almost all events belonging to the future state of the world of mankind, the changes and revolutions which come to pass in empires, kingdoms and nations, and all societies, depend innumerable ways on the acts of men's Wills: Yea, on an innumerable multitude of millions of millions of volitions of mankind. Such is the state and course of things in the world of mankind, that one single event, which appears in itself exceeding inconsiderable, may, in the progress and series of things, occasion a succession of the greatest and most important and extensive events; causing the state of mankind to be vastly different from what it would otherwise have been, for all succeeding generations.

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For instance, the coming into existence of those particular men, who have been the great conquerors of the world, which, under God, have had the main hand in all the consequent state of the world, in all after ages; such as Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander, Pompey, Julius Cæsar, &c. undoubtedly depended on many millions of acts of the Will, which followed, and were occasioned one by another, in their parents. And perhaps most of these volitions depended on millions of volitions of hundreds and thousands of others, their contemporaries of the same generation; and most of these on millions of millions of volitions of others in preceding generations. As we go back, still the number of volitions, which were some way the occasion of the event, multiply as the branches of a river, until they come at last, as it were, to an infinite number. This will not seem strange to any one who well considers the matter; if we recollect what philosophers tell us of the innumerable multitudes of those things which are, as it were, the *principia*, or *stamina vitæ*, concerned in generation; the *animalcula* in *semine masculo*, and the *ova* in the womb of the female; the impregnation, or animating of one of these in distinction from all the rest, must depend on things infinitely minute, relating to the time and circumstances of the act of the parents, the state of their bodies, &c. which must depend on innumerable foregoing circumstances and occurrences; which must depend, infinite ways, on foregoing acts of their Wills; which are occasioned by innumerable things that happen in the course of their lives, in which their own, and their neighbor's behavior, must have a hand, an infinite number of ways. And as the volitions of others must be so many ways concerned in the conception and birth of such men; so, no less, in their preservation, and circumstances of life, their particular determinations and actions, on which the great revolutions they were the occasions of, depended. As, for instance, when the conspirators in Persia, against the Magi, were consulting about a succession to the empire, it came into the mind of one of them, to propose, that he whose horse neighed first, when they came together the next morning, should be king. Now such a

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thing's coming into his mind, might depend on innumerable incidents, wherein the volitions of mankind had been concerned. But, in consequence of this accident, Darius, the son of Histaspes, was king. And if this had not been, probably his successor would not have been the same, and all the circumstances of the Persian empire might have been far otherwise. And then perhaps Alexander might never have conquered that empire. And then probably the circumstances of the world, in all succeeding ages, might have been vastly otherwise. I might further instance in many other occurrences; such as those on which depended Alexander's preservation, in the many critical junctures of his life, wherein a small trifle would have turned the scale against him; and the preservation and success of the Roman people, in the infancy of their kingdom and commonwealth, and afterwards; which all the succeeding changes in their state, and the mighty revolutions that afterwards came to pass in the habitable world, depended upon. But these hints may be sufficient for every discerning considerate person, to convince him, that the whole state of the world of mankind, in all ages, and the very being of every person who has ever lived in it, in every age, since the times of the ancient prophets, has depended on more volitions, or acts of the Wills of men, than there are sands on the sea shore.

And therefore, unless God does most exactly and perfectly foresee the future acts of men's Wills, all the predictions which he ever uttered concerning David, Hezekiah, Josiah, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander; concerning the four monarchies, and the revolutions in them; and concerning all the wars, commotions, victories, prosperities and calamities, of any of the kingdoms, nations or communities of the world, have all been without knowledge.

So that, according to this notion of God's not foreseeing the volitions and free actions of men, God could foresee nothing appertaining to the state of the world of mankind in future ages; not so much as the being of one person that should live in it; and could foreknow no events, but only such as He would bring to pass himself by the extraordinary interposition

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of his immediate power; or things which should come to pass in the natural material world, by the laws of motion, and course of nature, wherein that is independent on the actions or works of mankind; that is, as he might, like a very able mathematician and astronomer, with great exactness calculate the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and the greater wheels of the machine of the external creation.

And if we closely consider the matter, there will appear reason to convince us, that he could not, with any absolute certainty, foresee even these. As to the first, namely, things done by the immediate and extraordinary interposition of God's power, these cannot be foreseen, unless it can be foreseen when there shall be occasion for such extraordinary interposition. And that cannot be foreseen, unless the state of the moral world can be foreseen. For whenever God thus interposes, it is with regard to the state of the moral world, requiring such divine interposition. Thus God could not certainly foresee the universal deluge, the calling of Abraham, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues on Egypt, and Israel's redemption out of it, the expelling the seven nations of Canaan, and the bringing Israel into that land; for these all are represented as connected with things belonging to the state of the moral world. Nor can God foreknow the most proper and convenient time of the day of judgment and general conflagration; for that chiefly depends on the course and state of things in the moral world.

Nor, Secondly, can we on this supposition reasonably think, that God can certainly foresee what things shall come to pass, in the course of things, in the natural and material world, even those which, in an ordinary state of things, might be calculated by a good astronomer. For the moral world is the end of the natural world; and the course of things in the former, is undoubtedly subordinate to God's designs with respect to the latter. Therefore he has seen cause, from regard to the state of things in the moral world, extraordinarily to interpose, to interrupt and lay an arrest on the course of things in the natural world; and even in the greater wheels of its motion; even so as to stop the sun in its course. And

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unless he can foresee the volitions of men, and so know something of the future state of the moral world, he cannot know but that he may still have as great occasion to interpose in this manner, as ever he had; nor can he foresee how, or when he shall have occasion thus to interpose.

Corol. 1. It appears from the things which have been observed, that unless God foresees the volitions of moral agents, that cannot be true which is observed by the Apostle James, Acts xv. 18. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."

Corol. 2. It appears from what has been observed, that unless God foreknows the volitions of moral agents, all the prophecies of scripture have no better foundation than mere conjecture; and that, in most instances, a conjecture which must have the utmost uncertainty; depending on an innumerable, and, as it were, infinite multitude of volitions, which are all, even to God, uncertain events: However, these prophecies are delivered as absolute predictions, and very many of them in the most positive manner, with asseverations; and some of them with the most solemn oaths.

Corol. 3. It also follows, from what has been observed, that if this notion of God's ignorance of future volitions be true, in vain did Christ say (after uttering many great and important predictions, concerning God's moral kingdom, and things depending on men's moral actions) Matthew xxiv. 35. "Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my word shall not pass away."

Corol. 4. From the same notion of God's ignorance, it would follow, that in vain has God Himself often spoke of the predictions of his word, as evidences of his foreknowledge; and so as evidences of that which is his prerogative as GOD, and his peculiar glory, greatly distinguishing Him from all other beings; as in Isa. xli. 22....26, xliii. 9, 10, xliv. 8, xlv. 21, xlvi. 10, and xlviii. 14.

Arg. II. If God does not foreknow the volitions of moral agents, then he did not foreknow the fall of man, nor of angels, and so could not foreknow the great things which are consequent on these events; such as his sending his Son in-

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to the world to die for sinners, and all things pertaining to the great work of redemption; all the things which were done for four thousand years before Christ came, to prepare the way for it; and the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ; and the setting Him at the head of the universe, as King of heaven and earth, angels and men; and the setting up his church and kingdom in this world, and appointing Him the Judge of the world; and all that Satan should do in the world in opposition to the kingdom of Christ: And the great transactions of the day of judgment, that men and devils shall be the subjects of, and angels concerned in; they are all what God was ignorant of before the fall. And if so, the following scriptures, and others like them, must be without any meaning, or contrary to truth. Eph. i. 4. "According as he hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." 1 Pet. i. 20. "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world." 2 Tim. i. 9. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." So, Eph. iii. 11, (speaking of the wisdom of God in the work of redemption) "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus." Tit. i. 2. "In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Rom. viii. 29. "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate," &c. 1 Peter i. 2. "Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father."

If God did not foreknow the fall of man, nor the redemption by Jesus Christ, nor the volitions of man since the fall; then he did not foreknow the saints in any sense; neither as particular persons, nor as societies or nations; either by election, or mere foresight of their virtue or good works; or any foresight of any thing about them relating to their salvation; or any benefit they have by Christ, or any manner of concern of their's with a Redeemer.

Arg. III. On the supposition of God's ignorance of the future volitions of free agents, it will follow, that God must in many cases truly repent what he has done, so as properly

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to wish he had done otherwise: By reason that the event of things, in those affairs which are most important, viz. the affairs of his moral kingdom, being uncertain and contingent, often happens quite otherwise than he was aware beforehand. And there would be reason to understand, that in the most literal sense, in Gen. vi. 6, "It repented the Lord, that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." And that, 1 Sam. xv. 11, contrary to that, Numb. xxiii. 19, "God is not the Son of man, that He should repent." And, 1 Sam. xv. 29, "Also the strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent; for He is not a man that He should repent." Yea, from this notion it would follow, that God is liable to repent and be grieved at his heart, in a literal sense, continually; and is always exposed to an infinite number of real disappointments in his governing the world; and to manifold, constant, great perplexity and vexation; but this is not very consistent with his title of *God over all, blessed forever more;* which represents Him as possessed of perfect, constant and uninterrupted tranquillity and felicity, as God over the universe, and in his management of the affairs of the world, as supreme and universal Ruler. See Rom. i. 25. ix. 5. 2 Cor. xi. 31. 1 Tim. vi. 15.

Arg. IV. It will also follow from this notion, that as God is liable to be continually repenting what he has done; so he must be exposed to be constantly *changing* his mind and intentions, as to his future conduct; altering his measures, relinquishing his old designs, and forming new schemes and projections. For his purposes, even as to the main parts of his scheme, namely, such as belong to the state of his moral kingdom, must be always liable to be broken, through want of foresight; and he must be continually putting his system to rights, as it gets out of order through the contingence of the actions of moral agents; he must be a Being, who, instead of being absolutely immutable, must necessarily be the subject of infinitely the most numerous acts of repentance, and changes of intention, of any being whatsoever; for this plain reason, that his vastly extensive charge comprehends an infinitely greater number of those things which are to him con-

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tingent and uncertain. In such a situation, he must have little else to do, but to mend broken links as well as he can, and be rectifying his disjointed frame and disordered movements; in the best manner the case will allow. The Supreme Lord of all things must needs be under great and miserable disadvantages, in governing the world which he has made and has the care of, through his being utterly unable to find out things of chief importance, which, hereafter shall befal his system; which, if he did but know, he might make seasonable provision for. In many cases, there may be very great necessity that he should make provision, in the manner of his ordering and disposing things, for some great events which are to happen, of vast and extensive influence, and endless consequence to the universe; which he may see afterwards, when it is too late, and may wish in vain that he had known beforehand, that he might have ordered his affairs accordingly. And it is in the power of man, on these principles, by his devices, purposes and actions, thus to disappoint God, break his measures, make Him continually to change his mind, subject him to vexation, and bring him into confusion.

But how do these things consist with reason, or with the word of God? Which represents, that *all God's works*, all that he has ever to do, the whole scheme and series of his operations, are *from the beginning* perfectly in his view; and declares, that *whatever devices* and designs "are in the hearts of men, the counsel of the Lord is that which shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations," Prov. xix. 21. Psal. xxxiii. 10, 11. "And that which the Lord of Hosts hath purposed, none shall disannul," Isa. xiv. 27. And that he cannot be frustrated *in one design or thought*, Job. xlii. 2. "And that which God doth, it shall be forever, that nothing can be put to it, or taken from it," Eccl. iii. 14. The stability and perpetuity of God's counsels are expressly spoken of as connected with the foreknowledge of God, Isaiah xlvi. 10. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."....And how are these things consistent with what the Scripture says of God's infi-

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mutability, which represents Him as "without variableness, or shadow of turning;" and speaks of Him most particularly as unchangeable with regard to his purposes, Mal. iii. 6. "I am the Lord; I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed," Exod. iii. 14. I AM THAT I AM, Job. xxiii. 13, 14. "He is in one mind; and who can turn Him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doth: For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me."

ARG. V. If this notion of Gods's ignorance of the future volitions of moral agents be thoroughly considered in its consequences, it will appear to follow from it, that God, after he had made the world, was liable to be wholly *frustrated of his end* in the creation of it; and so has been, in like manner, liable to be frustrated of his end in all the great works he hath wrought. It is manifest, the moral world is the end of the natural: The rest of the creation is but an house which God hath built, with furniture, for moral agents: And the good or bad state of the moral world depends on the improvement they make of their natural agency, and so depends on their volitions. And therefore, if these cannot be foreseen by God, because they are contingent, and subject to no kind of necessity, then the affairs of the moral world are liable to go wrong, to any assignable degree; yea, liable to be utterly ruined. As on this scheme, it may well be supposed to be literally said, when mankind, by the abuse of their moral agency, became very corrupt before the flood, "that the Lord repented that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at his heart;" so, when He made the universe, He did not know but that he might be so disappointed in it, that it might grieve Him at his heart that he had made it. It actually proved, that all mankind became sinful, and a very great part of the angels apostatised: And how could God know beforehand, that all of them would not? And how could God know but that all mankind, notwithstanding means used to reclaim them, being still left to the freedom of their own Will, would continue in their apostasy, and grow worse and worse, as they of the old world before the flood did?

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According to the scheme I am endeavoring to confute, neither the fall of men or angels, could be foreseen, and God must be greatly disappointed in these events; and so the grand scheme and contrivance for our redemption, and destroying the works of the devil, by the Messiah, and all the great things God has done in the prosecution of these designs, must be only the fruits of his own disappointment, and contrivances of his to mend and patch up, as well as he could, his system, which originally was all very good, and perfectly beautiful; but was marred, broken and confounded by the free Will of angels and men. And still he must be liable to be totally disappointed a second time: He could not know, that He should have his desired success, in the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and exaltation of his only begotten Son, and other great works accomplished to restore the state of things: He could not know, after all, whether there would actually be any tolerable measure of restoration; for this depended on the free Will of man. There has been a general great apostasy of almost all the Christian world, to that which was worse than heathenism; which continued for many ages. And how could God without foreseeing men's volitions, know whether ever Christendom would return from this apostasy? And which way could He tell beforehand how soon it would begin? The apostle says, it began to work in his time; and how could it be known how far it would proceed in that age? Yea, how could it be known that the gospel, which was not effectual for the reformation of the Jews, would ever be effectual for the turning of the heathen nations from their heathen apostasy, which they had been confirmed in for so many ages?

It is represented often in Scripture, that God, who made the world for Himself, and created it for his pleasure, would infallibly obtain his end in the creation, and in all his works; that as all things are of Him, so would all be to Him; and that in the final issue of things, it would appear that He is *the first, and the last*, Rev. xx. 6. "And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." But these things are not consistent with God's

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being so liable to be disappointed in all his works, nor indeed with his failing of his end in any thing that He has undertaken, or done.

SECTION XII.

God's certain Foreknowledge *of the future volitions of moral agents, inconsistent with such a* Contingence *of those volitions, as is without all* Necessity.

HAVING proved, that GOD has a certain and infallible prescience of the acts of the Will of moral agents, I come now, in the *second* place, to shew the consequence; to shew how it follows from hence, that these events are *necessary*, with a Necessity of connexion or consequence.

The chief *Arminian* divines, so far as I have had opportunity to observe, deny this consequence; and affirm, that if such Foreknowledge be allowed, it is no evidence of any Necessity of the event foreknown. Now I desire, that this matter may be particularly and thoroughly inquired into. I cannot but think, that on particular and full consideration, it may be perfectly determined, whether it be indeed so, or not.

In order to a proper consideration of this matter, I would observe the following things.

I. It is very evident, with regard to a thing whose existence is infallibly and indissolubly connected with something which already hath, or has had existence, the existence of that thing is necessary. Here may be noted,

1. I observed before, in explaining the nature of Necessity, that in things which are past, their past existence is now necessary: Having already made sure of existence, it is too late for any possibility of alteration in that respect: It is now impossible that it should be otherwise than true, that that thing has existed.

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2. If there be any such thing as a divine Foreknowledge of the volitions of free agents, that Foreknowledge, by the supposition, is a thing which already *has*, and long ago *had* existence; and so, now its existence is necessary; it is now ututterly impossible to be otherwise, than that this Foreknowledge should be, or should have been.

3. It is also very manifest, that those things which are indissolubly connected with other things that are necessary, are themselves necessary. As that proposition whose truth is necessarily connected with another proposition, which is necessarily true, is itself necessarily true. To say otherwise, would be a contradiction: It would be in effect to say, that the connexion was indissoluble, and yet was not so, but might be broken. If that, whose existence is indissolubly connected with something, whose existence is now necessary, is itself not necessary, then it may *possibly not exist*, notwithstanding that indissoluble connexion of its existence. Whether the absurdity be not glaring, let the reader judge.

4. It is no less evident, that if there be a full, certain and infallible Foreknowledge of the future existence of the volitions of moral agents, then there is a certain, infallible and indissoluble connexion between those events and that Foreknowledge; and that therefore, by the preceding observations, those events are necessary events; being infallibly and indissolubly connected with that, whose existence already is, and so is now necessary, and cannot but have been.

To say, the Foreknowledge is certain and infallible, and yet the connexion of the event with that Foreknowledge is not indissoluble, but dissoluble and fallible is very absurd. To affirm it, would be the same thing as to affirm, that there is no necessary connexion between a proposition's being infallibly known to be true, and its being true indeed. So that it is perfectly demonstrable, that if there be any infallible knowledge of future volitions, the event is *necessary*; or, in other words, that it is *impossible* but the event should come to pass. For if it be not impossible but that it may be otherwise, then it is not impossible, but that the proposition which affirms its future coming to pass, may not now be true. But how absurd

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is that, on the supposition that there is now an infallible knowledge (i. e. knowledge which it is impossible should fail) that it is true. There is this absurdity in it that it is not impossible, but that there now should be no truth in that proposition, which is now infallibly known to be true.

II. That no future event can be certainly foreknown, whose existence is contingent, and without all Necessity, may be proved thus: It is impossible for a thing to be certainly known to any intellect without *evidence*. To suppose otherwise, implies a contradiction: Because for a thing to be certainly known to any understanding, is for it to be *evident* to that understanding; and for a thing to be *evident* to any understanding is the same thing, as for that understanding to *see evidence* of it: But no understanding, created or uncreated, can *see evidence* where there is none: For that is the same thing, as to see that to be, which is not. And therefore, if there be any truth which is absolutely without evidence, that truth is absolutely unknowable, insomuch that it implies a contradiction to suppose that it is known.

But if there be any future event, whose existence is contingent, without all Necessity, the future existence of that event is absolutely *without evidence*. If there be any evidence of it, it must be one of these two sorts, either *selfevidence*, or *proof*; for there can be no other sort of evidence, but one of these two; an evident thing must be either evident *in itself*, or evident *in something else*; that is evident by connexion with something else. But a future thing, whose existence is without all Necessity, can have neither of these sorts of evidence. It cannot be *selfevident*: For if it be, it may be now known, by what is now to be seen in the thing itself; either its present existence, or the Necessity of its nature: But both these are contrary to the supposition. It is supposed, both that the thing has no present existence to be seen; and also that it is not of such a nature as to be necessarily existent for the future: So that its future existence is not selfevident. And, *secondly*, neither is there any *proof*, or evidence *in any thing else*, or evidence of connexion with something else that is evident; for this is also con-

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trary to the supposition. It is supposed, that there is now nothing existent with which the future existence of the *contingent* event is connected. For such a connexion destroys its *contingence*, and supposes Necessity. Thus it is demonstrated, that there is in the nature of things absolutely no evidence at all of the future existence of that event, which is contingent, without all Necessity (if any such event there be) neither selfevidence nor proof. And therefore the thing in reality is not evident; and so cannot be seen to be evident, or, which is the same thing, cannot be known.

Let us consider this in an example. Suppose that five thousand seven hundred and sixty years ago, there was no other being but the Divine Being; and then this world, or some particular body or spirit, all at once starts out of nothing into being, and takes on itself a particular nature and form; all in *absolute contingence*, without any concern of God, or any other cause, in the matter; without any manner of ground or reason of its existence; or any dependence upon, or connexion at all with any thing foregoing: I say, that if this be supposed, there was no evidence of that event beforehand. There was no evidence of it to be seen *in the thing itself*; for the thing itself as yet, was not. And there was no evidence of it to be seen *in any thing else*; for *evidence in* something else, is *connexion with* something else: But such connexion is contrary to the supposition.....There was no evidence before, that this thing *would happen*; for by the supposition, there was no reason why *it should happen*, rather than something else, or rather than nothing. And if so, then all things before were exactly equal, and the same, with respect to that and other possible things; there was no preponderation, no superior weight or value; and therefore, nothing that could be of any weight or value; to determine any understanding. The thing was absolutely without evidence, and absolutely unknowable. An increase of understanding, or of the capacity of discerning, has no tendency, and makes no advance, to a discerning any signs or evidence of it, let it be increased ever so much; yea, if it be increased infinitely. The increase of the strength of sight

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may have a tendency to enable to discern the evidence which is far off, and very much hid, and deeply involved in clouds and darkness; but it has no tendency to enable to discern evidence where there is none. If the sight be infinitely strong, and the capacity of discerning infinitely great, it will enable to see all that there is, and to see it perfectly, and with ease; yet it has no tendency at all to enable a being to discern that evidence which is not; but on the contrary, it has a tendency to enable to discern with great certainty that there is none.

III. To suppose the future volitions of moral agents not to be necessary events; or, which is the same thing, events which it is not impossible but that they may not come to pass; and yet to suppose that God certainly foreknows them, and knows all things; is to suppose God's knowledge to be inconsistent with itself. For to say, that God certainly, and without all conjecture, knows that a thing will infallibly be, which at the same time he knows to be so contingent, that it may possibly not be, is to suppose his knowledge inconsistent with itself; or that one thing, that he knows, is utterly inconsistent with another thing, that he knows. It is the same thing as to say, he now knows a proposition to be of certain infallible truth, which he knows to be of contingent uncertain truth. If a future volition is so without all Necessity, that nothing hinders but that it may not be, then the proposition, which asserts its future existence, is so uncertain, that nothing hinders, but that the truth of it may entirely fail. And if God knows all things, he knows this proposition to be thus uncertain. And that is inconsistent with his knowing that it is infallibly true; and so inconsistent with his infallibly knowing that it is true. If the thing be indeed contingent, God views it so, and judges it to be contingent, if he views things as they are. If the event be not necessary, then it is possible it may never be: And if it be possible it may never be, God knows it may possibly never be; and that is to know that the proposition, which affirms its existence, may possibly not be true; and that is to know that the truth of it is uncertain; which surely is inconsistent with his knowing it as a certain truth. If volitions are in themselves contingent events, without all

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Necessity, then it is no argument of perfection of knowledge in any being to determine peremptorily that they will be; but on the contrary, an argument of ignorance and mistake; because it would argue, that he supposes that proposition to be certain, which in its own nature, and all things considered is uncertain and contingent. To say, in such a case, that God may have ways of knowing contingent events which we cannot conceive of, is ridiculous; as much so, as to say, that God may know contradictions to be true, for ought we know, or that he may know a thing to be certain, and at the same time know it not to be certain, though we cannot conceive how; because he has ways of knowing, which we cannot comprehend.

Corol. 1. From what has been observed it is evident, that the absolute *decrees* of God are no more inconsistent with human liberty, on account of any Necessity of the event, which follows from such decrees, than the absolute *Foreknowledge* of God. Because the connexion between the event and certain Foreknowledge, is as infallible and indissoluble, as between the event and an absolute decree. That is, it is no more impossible, that the event and decree should not agree together, than that the event and absolute Foreknowledge should disagree. The connexion between the event and Foreknowledge is absolutely perfect, by the supposition: Because it is supposed, that the certainty and infallibility of the knowledge is absolutely perfect. And it being so, the certainty cannot be increased; and therefore the connexion between the knowledge and thing known, cannot be increased; so that if a decree be added to the Foreknowledge, it does not at all increase the connexion, or make it more infallible or indissoluble. If it were not so, the certainty of knowledge might be increased by the addition of a decree; which is contrary to the supposition, which is, that the knowledge is absolutely perfect, or perfect to the highest possible degree.

There is as much of an impossibility but that the things which are infallibly foreknown, should be, or (which is the same thing) as great a necessity of their future existence, as if

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the event were already written down, and was known and read by all mankind, through all preceding ages, and there was the most indissoluble and perfect connexion possible, between the writing, and the thing written. In such a case, it would be as impossible the event should fail of existence, as if it had existed already; and a decree cannot make an event surer or more necessary than this.

And therefore, if there be any such Foreknowledge, as it has been proved there is, then Necessity of connexion and consequence, is not at all inconsistent with any liberty which man, or any other creature enjoys. And from hence it may be inferred, that absolute decrees of God, which do not at all increase the Necessity, are not at all inconsistent with the liberty which man enjoys, on any such account, as that they make the event decreed necessary, and render it utterly impossible but that it should come to pass. Therefore, if absolute decrees are inconsistent with man's liberty as a moral agent, or his liberty in a state of probation, or any liberty whatsoever that he enjoys, it is not on account of any Necessity which absolute decrees infer.

Dr. Whitby supposes, there is a great difference between God's Foreknowledge, and his decrees, with regard to Necessity of future events. In his Discourse on the Five Points, p. 474, &c. he says, "God's prescience has no influence at all on our actions:....Should God, (says he) by immediate revelation, give me the knowledge of the event of any man's state or actions, would my knowledge of them have any influence upon his actions? Surely none at all. Our knowledge doth not affect the things we know, to make them more certain, or more future, than they would be without it. Now, Foreknowledge in God is knowledge. As therefore knowledge has no influence on things that are, so neither has Foreknowledge on things that shall be. And consequently, the Foreknowledge of any action that would be otherwise free, cannot alter or diminish that freedom. Whereas God's decree of election is powerful and active, and comprehends the preparation and exhibition of such means, as shall unfrustrably produce the end. Hence God's prescience renders no actions

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necessary." And to this purpose, p. 473, he cites Origen, where he says, *God's prescience is not the cause of things future; but their being future is the cause of God's prescience that they will be:* And Le Blanc, where he says, *This is the truest resolution of this difficulty, that prescience is not the cause that things are future; but their being future is the cause they are foreseen.* In like manner, Dr. Clark, in his Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, p. 95....99. And the author of *the Freedom of Will, in God and the Creature*, speaking to the like purpose with Dr. Whitby, represents *Foreknowledge as having no more influence on things known, to make them necessary*, than *afterknowledge*, or to that purpose.

To all which I would say, that what is said about knowledge, its not having influence on the thing known to make it necessary, is nothing to the purpose, nor does it in the least affect the foregoing reasoning. Whether prescience be the thing that *makes* the event necessary or no, it alters not the case. Infallible Foreknowledge may *prove* the Necessity of the event foreknown, and yet not be the thing which *causes* the Necessity. If the Foreknowledge be absolute, this *proves* the event known to be necessary, or proves that it is impossible but that the event should be, by some means or other, either by a decree, or some other way, if there be any other way: Because, as was said before, it is absurd to say, that a proposition is known to be certainly and infallibly true, which yet may possibly prove not true.

The whole of the seeming force of this evasion lies in this; that, inasmuch as certain Foreknowledge does not *cause* an event to be necessary, as a decree does; therefore it does not *prove* it to be necessary, as a decree does. But there is no force in this arguing; for it is built wholly on this supposition, that nothing can *prove*, or *be an evidence* of a thing's being necessary, but that which has *a causal influence to make it so.* But this can never be maintained. If certain Foreknowledge of the future existing of an event, be not the thing, which first *makes* it impossible that it should fail of existence; yet it may, and certainly does, *demonstrate*, that it is impossible it should fail of it, however that impossibility comes. If Foreknowl-

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edge be not the cause, but the effect of this impossibility, it may prove that there is such an impossibility, as much as if it were the cause. It is as strong arguing from the effect to the cause, as from the cause to the effect. It is enough, that an existence, which is infallibly foreknown, cannot fail, whether that impossibility arise from the Foreknowledge, or is prior to it. It is as evident, as it is possible any thing should be, that it is impossible a thing, which is infallibly known to be true, should prove not to be true: Therefore there is a *Necessity* connected with such knowledge; whether the knowledge be the cause of this Necessity, or the Necessity the cause of the knowledge.

All certain knowledge, whether it be Foreknowledge or afterknowledge, or concomitant knowledge, proves the thing known now to be necessary, by some means or other; or proves that it is impossible it should now be otherwise than true. I freely allow that Foreknowledge does not prove a thing to be necessary any more than afterknowledge: But then afterknowledge, which is certain and infallible, proves that it is now become impossible but that the proposition known should be true. Certain afterknowledge, proves that it is now, in the time of the knowledge, by some means or other, become impossible but that the proposition, which predicates *past* existence on the event, should be true. And so does certain Foreknowledge prove, that now, in the time of the knowledge, it is by some means or other, become impossible but that the proposition, which predicates *future* existence on the event, should be true. The Necessity of the truth of the propositions, consisting in the present impossibility of the nonexistence of the event affirmed, in both cases, is the immediate ground of the certainty of the knowledge; there can be no certainty of knowledge without it.

There must be a certainty in things themselves, before they are certainly known, or (which is the same thing) known to be certain. For certainty of knowledge is nothing else but knowing or discerning the certainty there is in the things themselves, which are known. Therefore there must be a

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certainty in things to be a ground of certainty of knowledge, and to render things capable of being known to be certain.... And this is nothing but the Necessity of the truth known, or its being impossible but that it should be true; or, in other words, the firm and infallible connexion between the subject and predicate of the proposition that contains that truth. All certainty of knowledge consists in the view of the firmness of that connexion. So God's certain Foreknowledge of the future existence of any event, is his view of the firm and indissoluble connexion of the subject and predicate of the proposition that affirms its future existence. The subject is that possible event; the predicate is its future existing: But if future existence be firmly and indissolubly connected with that event, then the future existence of that event is necessary. If God certainly knows the future existence of an event which is wholly contingent, and may possibly never be, then He sees a firm connexion between a subject and predicate that are not firmly connected; which is a contradiction.

I allow what Dr. Whitby says to be true, *That mere knowledge does not affect the thing known, to make it more certain or more future.* But yet, I say, it *supposes* and *proves* the thing to be *already*, both *future*, and *certain*; i. e. necessarily future. Knowledge of *futurity*, supposes *futurity*; and a *certain knowledge* of futurity, supposes *certain futurity*, antecedent to that certain knowledge. But there is no other certain futurity of a thing, antecedent to certainty of knowledge, than a prior impossibility but that the thing should prove true; or (which is the same thing) the Necessity of the event.

I would observe one thing further concerning this matter; it is this; that if it be as those forementioned writers suppose, that God's Foreknowledge is not the cause, but the effect of the existence of the event foreknown; this is so far from shewing that this Foreknowledge doth not infer the Necessity of the existence of that event, that it rather shews the contrary the more plainly. Because it shews the existence of the event to be so settled and firm, that it is as if it had already been; inasmuch as *in effect* it actually exists already; its future existence has already had actual *influence*, and *effi-*

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agency, and has *produced an effect*, viz. Prescience: The effect exists already; and as the effect supposes the cause, is connected with the cause, and depends entirely upon it, therefore it is as if the future event, which is the cause, had existed already. The effect is as firm as possible, it having already the possession of existence, and made sure of it. But the effect cannot be more firm and stable than its cause, ground and reason. The building cannot be firmer than the foundation.

To illustrate this matter, let us suppose the appearances and images of things in a glass; for instance, a reflecting telescope to be the real effects of heavenly bodies (at a distance, and out of sight) which they resemble: If it be so, then as these images in the telescope have had a past actual existence, and it is become utterly impossible now that it should be otherwise than that they have existed; so they, being the true effects of the heavenly bodies they resemble, this proves the existing of those heavenly bodies to be as real, infallible, firm and necessary, as the existing of these effects; the one being connected with, and wholly depending on the other. Now let us suppose future existences some way or other to have influence back, to produce effects beforehand, and cause exact and perfect images of themselves in a glass, a thousand years before they exist, yea, in all preceding ages; but yet that these images are real effects of these future existences, perfectly dependent on, and connected with them as their cause; these effects and images, having already had actual existence, rendering that matter of their existing perfectly firm and stable, and utterly impossible to be otherwise; this proves in like manner, as in the other instance, that the existence of the things, which are their causes, is also equally sure, firm and necessary; and that it is alike impossible but that they should be, as if they had been already, as their effects have. And if, instead of images in a glass, we suppose the antecedent effects to be perfect ideas of them in the Divine Mind, which have existed there from all eternity, which are as properly effects, as truly and properly connected with their cause, the case is not altered.

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Another thing which has been said by some *Arminians*, to take off the force of what is urged from God's Prescience, against the contingence of the volitions of moral agents, is to this purpose; "That when we talk of Foreknowledge in God, there is no strict propriety in our so speaking; and that although it be true, that there is in God the most perfect knowledge of all events from eternity to eternity, yet there is no such thing as *before* and *after* in God, but he sees all things by one perfect unchangeable view, without any succession."....

To this I answer,

1. It has been already shewn, that all certain knowledge proves the Necessity of the truth known; whether it be *before*, *after*, or *at the same time*....Though it be true, that there is no succession in God's knowledge, and the manner of his knowledge, is to us inconceivable, yet thus much we know concerning it, that there is no event, past, present, or to come, that God is ever uncertain of: He never is, never was, and never will be without infallible knowledge of it: He always sees the existence of it to be certain and infallible. And as he always sees things just as they are in truth; hence there never is in reality any thing contingent in such a sense, as that possibly it may happen never to exist. If, strictly speaking, there is no Foreknowledge in God, it is because those things, which are future to us, are as present to God, as if they already had existence: And that is as much as to say, that future events are always in God's view as evident, clear, sure and necessary, as if they already were. If there never is a time wherein the existence of the event is not present with God, then there never is a time wherein it is not as much impossible for it to fail of existence, as if its existence were present, and were already come to pass.

God's viewing things so perfectly and unchangeably as that there is no succession in his ideas or judgment does not hinder but that there is properly now, in the mind of God, a certain and perfect knowledge of moral actions of men, which to us are an hundred years hence: Yea the objection supposes this; and therefore it certainly does not hinder but that, by

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the foregoing arguments, it is now impossible these moral actions should not come to pass.

We know, that God knows the future voluntary actions of men in such a sense beforehand, as that he is able particularly to declare, and foretell them, and write them, or cause them to be written down in a book, as He often has done; and that therefore the necessary connexion which there is between God's knowledge and the event known, does as much prove the event to be necessary beforehand, as if the Divine Knowledge were in the same sense before the event, as the prediction or writing is. If the knowledge be infallible, then the expression of it in the written prediction is infallible; that is, there is an infallible connexion between that written prediction and the event. And if so, then it is impossible it should ever be otherwise, than that that prediction and the event should agree: And this is the same thing as to say, it is impossible but that the event should come to pass: And this is the same as to say that its coming to pass is necessary.....So that it is manifest, that there being no proper succession in God's mind, makes no alteration as to the Necessity of the existence of the events which God knows. Yea,

2. This is so far from weakening the proof, which has been given of the impossibility of the not coming to pass of future events known, as that it establishes that, wherein the strength of the foregoing arguments consists, and shews the clearness of the evidence. For,

(1.) The very reason why God's knowledge is without succession, is because it is absolutely perfect, to the highest possible degree of clearness and certainty: All things, whether past, present, or to come, being viewed with equal evidence and fulness; future things being seen with as much clearness, as if they were present; the view is always in absolute perfection; and absolute constant perfection admits of no alteration, and so no succession; the actual existence of the thing known, does not at all increase, or add to the clearness or certainty of the thing known: God calls the things that are not as though they were; they are all one to him as as if they had already existed. But herein consists the strength of the

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demonstration before given, of the impossibility of the not existing of those things, whose existence God knows; that it is as impossible they should fail of existence, as if they existed already. This objection, instead of weakening this argument, sets it in the clearest and strongest light; for it supposes it to be so indeed, that the existence of future events is in God's view so much as if it already had been, that when they come actually to exist, it makes not the least alteration or variation in his view or knowledge of them.

(2.) The objection is founded on the *immutability* of God's knowledge: For it is the immutability of knowledge which makes his knowledge to be without succession. But this most directly and plainly demonstrates the thing I insist on, viz. that it is utterly impossible the known events should fail of existence. For if that were possible, then it would be possible for there to be a change in God's knowledge and view of things. For if the known event should fail of existence, and not come into being, as God expected, then God would see it, and so would change his mind, and see his former mistake; and thus there would be change and succession in his knowledge. But as God is immutable, and so it is utterly impossible that his view should be changed; so it is, for the same reason, just so impossible that the foreknown event should not exist: And that is to be impossible in the highest degree: And therefore the contrary is necessary. Nothing is more impossible than that the immutable God should be changed, by the succession of time; who comprehends all things, from eternity to eternity, in one, most perfect, and unalterable view; so that his whole eternal duration is *vitæ interminabilis, tota, simul, et perfecta possessio.*

On the whole, I need not fear to say, that there is no geometrical theorem or proposition whatsoever, more capable of strict demonstration, than that God's certain prescience of the volitions of moral agents is inconsistent with such a contingence of these events, as is without all Necessity; and so is inconsistent with the *Arminian* notion of liberty.

Corol. 2. Hence the doctrine of the *Calvinists*, concerning the absolute decrees of God, does not at all infer any more

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fatality in things, than will demonstrably follow from the doctrine of most *Arminian* divines, who acknowledge God's omniscience, and universal prescience. Therefore all objections they make against the doctrine of the *Calvinists*, as implying Hobbes doctrine of Necessity, or the *stoical* doctrine of *fate*, lie no more against the doctrine of *Calvinists*, than their own doctrine: And therefore it doth not become those divines, to raise such an outcry against the *Calvinists*, on this account.

Corol. 3. Hence all arguing from Necessity, against the doctrine of the inability of unregenerate men to perform the conditions of salvation, and the commands of God requiring spiritual duties, and against the *Calvinistic* doctrine of efficacious grace; I say, all arguings of *Arminians* (such of them as own God's omniscience) against these things, on this ground, that these doctrines, though they do not suppose men to be under any constraint or coaction, yet suppose them under Necessity, with respect to their moral actions, and those things which are required of them in order to their acceptance with God; and their arguing against the Necessity of men's volitions, taken from the reasonableness of God's commands, promises, and threatenings, and the sincerity of his counsels and invitations; and all objections against any doctrines of the *Calvinists* as being inconsistent with human liberty, because they infer Necessity; I say, all these arguments and objections must fall to the ground, and be justly esteemed vain and frivolous, as coming from them; being maintained in an inconsistence with themselves, and in like manner levelled against their own doctrine, as against the doctrine of the *Calvinists*.

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SECTION XIII.

Whether we suppose the volitions of moral agents to be connected with any thing antecedent, or not, yet they must be necessary in such a sense as to overthrow Arminian *Liberty.*

EVERY act of the Will has a cause, or it has not. If it has a cause, then, according to what has already been demonstrated, it is not contingent, but necessary; the effect being necessarily dependent and consequent on its cause; and that let the cause be what it will. If the cause is the Will itself, by antecedent acts choosing and determining; still the *determined* and *caused* act must be a necessary effect. The act, that is the determined effect of the foregoing act which is its cause, cannot prevent the efficiency of its cause; but must be wholly subject to its determination and command, as much as the motions of the hands and feet. The consequent commanded acts of the Will are as passive and as necessary, with respect to the antecedent determining acts as the parts of the body are to the volitions which determine and command them. And therefore, if all the free acts of the Will are thus, if they are all determined effects, determined by the Will itself, that is, determined by antecedent choice, then they are all necessary; they are all subject to, and decisively fixed by the foregoing act, which is their cause: Yea, even the determining act itself; for that must be determined and fixed by another act, preceding that, if it be a free and voluntary act; and so must be necessary. So that by this all the free acts of the Will are necessary, and cannot be free unless they are necessary: Because they cannot be free, according to the *Arminian* notion of freedom, unless they are determined by the Will; which is to be determined by antecedent choice; which being their cause, proves them necessary. And yet they say, Necessity is utterly inconsistent with Liberty. So that, by their scheme, the acts of the Will cannot be free, unless they are necessary, and yet cannot be free if they be necessary!

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But if the other part of the dilemma be taken, and it be affirmed that the free acts of the Will have no cause, and are connected with nothing whatsoever that goes before them and determines them, in order to maintain their proper and absolute contingence, and this should be allowed to be possible; still it will not serve their turn. For if the volition come to pass by perfect contingence, and without any cause at all, then it is certain, no act of the Will, no prior act of the soul was the cause, no determination or choice of the soul, had any hand in it. The Will, or the soul, was indeed the subject of what happened to it accidentally, but was not the cause. The Will is not active in causing or determining, but purely the passive subject; at least, according to their notion of action and passion. In this case, contingence does as much prevent the determination of the Will, as a proper cause; and as to the Will, it was necessary, and could be no otherwise. For to suppose that it could have been otherwise, if the Will or soul had pleased, is to suppose that the act is dependent on some prior act of choice or pleasure; contrary to what is now supposed: It is to suppose that it might have been otherwise, if its cause had made it or ordered it otherwise. But this does not agree to its having no cause or orderer at all. That must be necessary as to the soul; which is dependent on no free act of the soul: But that which is without a cause, is dependent on no free act of the soul: Because, by the supposition, it is dependent on nothing, and is connected with nothing. In such a case, the soul is necessarily subjected to what accident brings to pass, from time to time, as much as the earth, that is inactive, is necessarily subjected to what falls upon it. But this does not consist with the *Arminian* notion of Liberty, which is the Will's power of determining itself in its own acts, and being wholly active in it, without passiveness, and without being subject to Necessity.....Thus Contingence, belongs to the *Arminian* notion of Liberty, and yet is inconsistent with it.

I would here observe, that the author of the *Essay on the Freedom of Will, in God and the Creature*, page 76, 77, says as follows: "The word *Chance* always means something done

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without design. Chance and design stand in direct opposition to each other: And chance can never be properly applied to acts of the Will, which is the spring of all design, and which designs to choose whatsoever it doth choose, whether there be any superior fitness in the thing which it chooses, or no; and it designs to determine itself to one thing, where two things, perfectly equal, are proposed, merely because it will." But herein appears a very great inadvertence in this author. For *if the Will be the spring of all design*, as he says, then certainly it is not always the *effect* of design; and the acts of the Will themselves must sometimes come to pass, when they do not *spring from* design; and consequently come to pass by chance, according to his own definition of chance. And if *the Will designs to choose whatsoever it does choose*, and *designs to determine itself*, as he says, then it designs to determine all its designs. Which carries us back from one design to a foregoing design determining that, and to another determining that; and so on *in infinitum*. The very first design must be the effect of foregoing design, or else it must be by chance, in his notion of it.

Here another alternative may be proposed, relating to the connexion of the acts of the Will with something foregoing that is their cause, not much unlike to the other; which is this; either human liberty is such, that it may well stand with volitions being necessarily connected with the views of the understanding, and so is consistent with Necessity; or it is inconsistent with, and contrary to, such a connexion and Necessity. The former is directly subversive of the *Arminian* notion of liberty, consisting in freedom from all Necessity. And if the latter be chosen and it be said, that liberty is inconsistent with any such necessary connexion of volition with foregoing views of the understanding, it consisting in freedom from any such Necessity of the Will as that would imply; then the liberty of the soul consists (in part at least) in freedom from restraint, limitation and government, in its actings, by the understanding, and in liberty and liableness to act contrary to the understanding's views and dictates: And consequently the more the soul has of this disengagedness, in

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its acting, the more liberty. Now let it be considered what this brings the noble principle of human liberty to, particularly when it is possessed and enjoyed in its perfection, viz. a full and perfect freedom and liableness to act altogether at random, without the least connexion with, or restraint or government by, any dictate of reason, or any thing whatsoever apprehended, considered or viewed by the understanding; as being inconsistent with the full and perfect sovereignty of the Will over its own determinations. The notion mankind have conceived of liberty, is some dignity or privilege, something worth claiming. But what dignity or privilege is there, in being given up to such a wild contingence, as this, to be perfectly and constantly liable to act unintelligently and unreasonably, and as much without the guidance of understanding, as if we had none, or were as destitute of perception, as the smoke that is driven by the wind!

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PART III.

Wherein is inquired, whether any such liberty of Will as Arminians *hold, be necessary to* Moral Agency, Virtue *and* Vice, Praise *and* Dispraise, *&c.*

SECTION I.

GOD's Moral Excellency *necessary, yet virtuous and praiseworthy.*

HAVING considered the *first* thing that was proposed to be inquired into, relating to that freedom of Will which *Arminians* maintain; namely, Whether any such thing does, ever did, or ever can exist, or be conceived of; I come now to the *second* thing proposed to be the subject of inquiry, viz. Whether any such kind of liberty be requsite to moral agency, virtue and vice, praise and blame, reward and punishment, &c.

I shall begin with some consideration of the virtue and agency of the Supreme moral agent, and fountain of all agency and virtue.

Dr. Whitby, in his discourses on the five Points p. 14, says, "If all human actions are necessary, virtue and vice must be empty names; we being capable of nothing that is blameworthy, or deserveth praise; for who can blame a person for doing only what he could not help, or judge that he deserveth praise only for what he could not avoid?" To the like purpose he speaks in places innumerable; especially in his discourse on the *Freedom of the Will;* constantly maintaining, that a *freedom not only from coaction, but necessity,* is absolute-

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ly requisite, in order to actions being either worthy of blame, or deserving of praise. And to this agrees, as is well known, the current doctrine of *Arminian* writers, who, in general, hold, that there is no virtue or vice, reward or punishment, nothing to be commended or blamed, without this freedom. And yet Dr. Whitby, p. 300, allows, that God is without this freedom; and *Arminians*, so far as I have had opportunity to observe, generally acknowledge that God is necessarily holy, and his Will necessarily determined to that which is good.

So that putting these things together, the infinitely holy God, who used always to be esteemed by God's people not only virtuous, but a Being in whom is all possible virtue, and every virtue in the most absolute purity and perfection, and in infinitely greater brightness and amiableness than in any creature; the most perfect pattern of virtue, and the fountain from whom all others virtue is as beams from the sun; and who has been supposed to be, on the account of his virtue and holiness, infinitely more worthy to be esteemed, loved, honored, admired, commended, extolled and praised, than any creature: And He, who is thus every where represented in Scripture; I say, this being, according to this notion of Dr. Whitby, and other *Arminians*, has no virtue at all: Virtue, when ascribed to him, is but *an empty name*; and he is deserving of no commendation or praise: Because he is under necessity. He cannot avoid being holy and good as he is; therefore no thanks to him for it. It seems, the holiness, justice, faithfulness, &c. of the Most High, must not be accounted to be of the nature of that which is virtuous and praiseworthy. They will not deny, that these things in God are good; but then we must understand them, that they are no more virtuous, or of the nature of any thing commendable, than the good that is in any other being that is not a moral agent; as the brightness of the sun, and the fertility of the earth, are good, but not virtuous, because these properties are necessary to these bodies, and not the fruit of selfdetermining power.

There needs no other confutation of this notion of God's not being virtuous or praiseworthy, to christians acquainted with the Bible, but only stating and particularly representing

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it. To bring texts of Scripture, wherein God is represented as in every respect, in the highest manner virtuous, and supremely praiseworthy, would be endless, and is altogether needless to such as have been brought up in the light of the gospel.

It were to be wished, that Dr. Whitby, and other divines of the same sort, had explained themselves, when they have asserted, that *that* which is necessary, is *not deserving of praise;* at the same time that they have owned God's perfection to be necessary, and so in effect representing God as not deserving praise. Certainly, if their words have any meaning at all, by *praise*, they must mean the exercise or testimony of some sort of esteem, respect and honorable regard. And will they then say, that men are worthy of that esteem, respect and honor for their virtue, small and imperfect as it is, which yet God is not worthy of, for his infinite righteousness, holiness and goodness? If so, it must be, because of some sort of peculiar excellency in the virtuous man, which is his prerogative, wherein he really has the preference; some dignity, that is entirely distinguished from any excellency, amiableness, or honorableness in God: Not in imperfection and dependence, but in preeminence: Which therefore he does not receive from God, nor is God the fountain or pattern of it; nor can God, in that respect, stand in competition with him, as the object of honor and regard; but man may claim a peculiar esteem, commendation and glory, that God can have no pretension to. Yea, God has no right, by virtue of his necessary holiness, to intermeddle with that grateful respect and praise due to the virtuous man, who chooses virtue, in the exercise of a freedom *ad utrumque;* any more than a precious stone, which cannot avoid being hard and beautiful.

And if it be so, let it be explained what that peculiar respect is, that is due to the virtuous man, which differs in nature and kind, in some way of preeminence from all that is due to God. What is the name or description of that peculiar affection? Is it esteem, love, admiration, honor, praise or gratitude? The Scripture every where represents God as the highest object of all these: There we read of the *soul's magnifying the Lord,*

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of loving Him with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind, and with all the strength; admiring Him, *and his righteous acts*, or greatly regarding them, as *marvellous and wonderful; honoring, glorifying, exalting, extolling, blessing, thanking* and *praising* Him; *giving unto Him all the glory* of the good which is done or received, rather than unto men; *that no flesh should glory in his presence;* but that He should be regarded as the Being to whom all glory is due. What then is that respect? What passion, affection or exercise is it, that *Arminians* call *praise*, diverse from all these things, which men are worthy of for their virtue, and which God is not worthy of, in any degree?

If that necessity which attends God's moral perfections and actions, be as inconsistent with a being worthy of praise as a necessity of coaction; as is plainly implied in, or inferred from Dr. Whitby's discourse; then why should we thank God for his goodness, any more than if he were forced to be good, or any more than we should thank one of our fellow-creatures who did us good, not freely, and of good will, or from any kindness of heart, but from mere compulsion, or extrinsical necessity? *Arminians* suppose, that God is necessarily a good and gracious Being: For this they make the ground of some of their main arguments against many doctrines maintained by *Calvinists;* they say, these are *certainly* false, and it is *impossible* they should be true, because they are not consistent with the goodness of God. This supposes, that it is *impossible* but that God should be good: For if it be possible that he should be otherwise, then that impossibility of the truth of these doctrines ceases, according to their own argument.

That virtue in God is not, in the most proper sense, *rewardable*, is not for want of merit in his moral perfections and actions, sufficient to deserve rewards from his creatures; but because he is infinitely above all capacity of receiving any reward or benefit from the creature: He is already infinitely and unchangeably happy, and we cannot be profitable unto him. But still he is worthy of our supreme benevolence for his virtue; and would be worthy of our beneficence, which is

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the fruit and expression of benevolence, if our goodness could extend to him. If God deserves to be thanked and praised for his goodness, he would, for the same reason, deserve that we should also *requite* his kindness, if that were possible. *What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?* is the natural language of thankfulness; and so far as in us lies, it is our duty to recompense God's goodness, and *render again according to benefits received.* And that we might have opportunity for so natural an expression of our gratitude to God, as beneficence, notwithstanding his being infinitely above our reach: He has appointed others to be his receivers, and to stand in his stead, as the objects of our beneficence; such are especially our indigent brethren.

SECTION II.

The Acts of the Will of the human Soul of JESUS CHRIST, necessarily holy, *yet truly virtuous, praiseworthy, rewardable, &c.*

I HAVE already considered how Dr. Whitby insists upon it, that a freedom, not only from coaction, but necessity, is *requisite either to virtue or vice, praise or dispraise, reward or punishment.* He also insists on the same freedom as absolutely requisite to a person's being the subject of a *law*, of *precepts* or *prohibitions*; in the book beforementioned, (p. 301, 314, 328, 339, 340, 341, 342, 347, 361, 373, 410.) And of *promises* and *threatenings*, (p. 298, 301, 305, 311, 339, 340, 363.) And as requisite to *a state of trial*, (p. 297, &c.)

Now therefore, with an eye to these things, I would inquire into the moral conduct and practice of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he exhibited in his human nature here, in his state of humiliation. And *first*, I would shew, that his holy behavior was *necessary*; or that it was *impossible* it should be otherwise, than that he should behave himself holily, and that he should

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perfectly holy in each individual act of his life. And *secondly*, that his holy behavior was properly of the nature of *virtue* and was *worthy of praise*; and that he was the subject of *law*, *precepts* or *commands*, *promises* and *rewards*; and that he was *in a state of trial*.

I. It was *impossible*, that the acts of the Will of the human soul of Christ should, in any instance, degree or circumstance, be otherwise than holy, and agreeable to God's nature and will. The following things make this evident.

1. God had promised so effectually to preserve and uphold Him by his Spirit, under all his temptations, that he could not fail of reaching the end for which he came into the world; which he would have failed of, had he fallen into sin. We have such a promise, Isa. xlii. 1, 2, 3, 4. "Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him: He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles: He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law." This promise of Christ's having God's Spirit put upon Him, and his not crying and lifting up his voice, &c. relates to the time of Christ's appearance on earth; as is manifest from the nature of the promise, and also the application of it in the New Testament, Matthew xii. 18. And the words imply a promise of his being so upheld by God's Spirit, that he should be preserved from sin; particularly from pride and vain glory, and from being overcome by any of the temptations, he should be under to affect the glory of this world, the pomp of an earthly prince, or the applause and praise of men: And that he should be so upheld, that he should by no means fail of obtaining the end of his coming into the world, of bringing forth judgment unto victory, and establishing his kingdom of grace in the earth. And in the following verses, this promise is confirmed, with the greatest imaginable solemnity. "Thus saith the LORD, HE that created the heavens, and stretched them out: He that spread forth

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the earth, and that which cometh out of it: He that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I theLord have called Thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand; and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am JEHOVAH, that is my name," &c.

Very parallel with these promises is that, Isa. xlix. 7, 8, 9, which also has an apparent respect to the time of Christ's humiliation on earth. "Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers; kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship; because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose Thee. Thus saith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard Thee; in a day of salvation have I helped Thee; and I will preserve Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth," &c.

And in Isa. l. 5....9, we have the Messiah expressing his assurance, that God would help Him, by so opening his ear, or inclining his heart to God's commandments that He should not be rebellious, but should persevere, and not apostatize, or turn his back; that through God's help, He should be immovable, in a way of obedience, under the great trials of reproach and suffering he should meet with; setting his face like a flint: So that he knew, he should not be ashamed, or frustrated in his design, and finally should be approved and justified, as having done his work faithfully. "The Lord hath opened mine ear; so that I was not rebellious, neither turned away my back: I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me: Who will contend with me? Let us stand together. Who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me: Behold the Lord God will help me: Who

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is he that shall condemn me? Lo, they shall all wax old as a garment, the moth shall eat them up."

2. The same thing is evident from all the promises which God made to the Messiah, of his future glory, kingdom and success, in his office and character of a Mediator: Which glory could not have been obtained, if his holiness had failed, and he had been guilty of sin. God's absolute promise of any thing, makes the things promised *necessary*, and their failing to take place absolutely *impossible*: And, in like manner, it makes those things necessary, on which the things promised depend, and without which they cannot take effect. Therefore it appears, that it was utterly impossible that Christ's holiness should fail, from such absolute promises as those, Psal. cx. 4. "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedeck." And from every other promise in that psalm, contained in each verse of it. And Psal. ii. 7, 8. "I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee: Ask of me, and I will give Thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, &c." Psal. xlv. 3, 4, &c. "Gird thy sword on thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy Glory and thy Majesty; and in thy Majesty ride prosperously." And so every thing that is said from thence to the end of the Psalm. And those promises, Isa. lii. 13, 14, 15, and liii. 10, 11, 12. And all those promises which God makes to the Messiah, of success, dominion and glory in the character of Redeemer, in Isa. chap. xlix.

3. It was often promised to the Church of God of old, for their comfort, that God would give them a righteous, sinless Saviour. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous Branch; and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days shall Judah be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely. And this is the name whereby He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." So, Jer. xxxiii. 15. "I will cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land." Isa. ix. 6, 7. "For unto us

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a Child is born; upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice, from henceforth, even for ever: The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will do this." Chap. xi. at the beginning, "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him....the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord:....With righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity:....Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." Chap. lii. 13. "My Servant shall deal prudently." Chap. liii. 9. "Because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." If it be impossible that these promises should fail, and it be easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one jot or tittle of these promises of God to pass away, then it was impossible that Christ should commit any sin. Christ himself signified, that it was impossible but that the things which were spoken concerning Him, should be fulfilled. Luke xxiv. 44. "That all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me." Matth. xxvi. 54. "But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Mark xiv. 49. "But the Scriptures must be fulfilled." And so the apostle, Acts i. 16. "This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled."

4. All the promises, which were made to the Church of old, of the Messiah as a future Saviour, from that made to our first parents in paradise, to that which was delivered by the prophet Malachi, shew it to be impossible that Christ should not have persevered in perfect holiness. The ancient predictions given to God's church of the Messiah as a Saviour, were of the nature of promises; as is evident by the predictions themselves, and the manner of delivering them. But they are expressly, and very often called *promises* in the New Testament; as in Luke i. 54, 55, 72, 73. Acts xiii. 32, 33. Rom. i. 1, 2, 3, and chap. xv. 8. Heb. vi. 13, &c. These promises were often made with great solemnity, and confirmed with an oath; as in Gen. xxii. 16, 17, 18. "By myself have

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I sworn, saith the Lord, that in blessing, I will bless thee, and in multiplying, I will multiply thy seed, as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore.....And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Compare Luke i. 72, 73, and Gal. iii. 8, 15, 16. The apostle in Heb. vi. 17, 18, speaking of this promise to Abraham, says, "Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two IMMUTABLE things, in which it was IMPOSSIBLE for God to lie, he might have strong consolation."....In which words, the *necessity* of the accomplishment, or (which is the same thing) the *impossibility* of the contrary, is fully declared. So God confirmed the promise of the great salvation of the Messiah, made to David, by an oath; Psal. lxxxix. 3, 4. "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant; thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations." There is nothing that is so abundantly set forth in Scripture, as sure and irrefragable, as this promise and oath to David. See Psalm lxxxix. 34, 35, 36. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Isa. lv. 3. Acts ii. 29, 30, and xiii. 34. The Scripture expressly speaks of it as utterly *impossible* that this promise and oath to David, concerning the everlasting dominion of the Messiah of his seed, should fail. Jer. xxxiii. 15, &c. "In those days, and at that time, I will cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David....For thus saith the Lord, David shall never want a Man to sit upon the throne of the House of Israel." Ver. 20, 21. "If you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne" So in verse 25, 26....Thus abundant is the Scripture in representing how *impossible* it was, that the promises made of old concerning the great salvation and kingdom of the Messiah should fail; which implies, that it was impossible that this Messiah, the second Adam, the promised seed of Abraham, and of David, should fall from his integrity, as the first Adam did.

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5. All the promises that were made to the church of God under the Old Testament, of the great enlargement of the church, and advancement of her glory, in the days of the gospel, after the coming of the Messiah; the increase of her light, liberty, holiness, joy, triumph over her enemies, &c. of which so great a part of the Old Testament consists; which are repeated so often, are so variously exhibited, so frequently introduced with great pomp and solemnity, and are so abundantly sealed with typical and symbolical representations: I say, all these promises imply, that the Messiah should perfect the work of redemption; and this implies, that he should persevere in the work, which the Father had appointed him, being in all things conformed to his Will. These promises were often confirmed by an oath. (See Isa. liv. 9, with the context; chap. lxii. 8.) And it is represented as utterly impossible that these promises should fail. (Isa. xlix. 15, with the context; chap. liv. 10, with the context; chap. li. 4.....8; chap. xl. 8, with the context.) And therefore it was *impossible* that the Messiah should fail, or commit sin.

6. It was *impossible* that the Messiah should fail of persevering in integrity and holiness, as the first Adam did, because this would have been inconsistent with the promises, which God made to the blessed Virgin, his mother, and to her husband; implying, that *He should save his people from their sins*, that God *would give him the throne of his Father David*, that *He should reign over the house of Jacob forever*; and that *of his kingdom there should be no end.* These promises were sure, and it was *impossible* they should fail....And therefore the Virgin Mary, in trusting fully to them, acted reasonably, having an immoveable foundation of her faith; as Elisabeth observes, Luke i. 45. "And blessed is she that believeth; for there shall be a performance of those things, which were told her from the Lord."

7. That it should have been possible that Christ should sin, and so fail in the work of our redemption, does not consist with the eternal purpose and decree of God, revealed in the scriptures, that He would provide salvation for fallen man in and by Jesus Christ, and that salvation should be offered to

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sinners through the preaching of the gospel. Such an absolute decree as this, *Arminians* do not deny.....Thus much at least (out of all controversy) is implied in such Scriptures, as 1 Cor. ii. 7. Eph. i. 4, 5, and chap. iii. 9, 10, 11. 1 Pet. i. 19, 20. Such an absolute decree as this, *Arminians* allow to be signified in these texts. And the *Arminians*, election of nations and societies, and general election of the Christian Church, and conditional election of particular persons, imply this. God could not decree before the foundation of the world, to save all that should believe in, and obey Christ, unless he had absolutely decreed, that salvation should be provided, and effectually wrought out by Christ. And since (as the *Arminians* themselves strenuously maintain) a decree of God infers *necessity*; hence it became *necessary*, that Christ should persevere, and actually work out salvation for us, and that he should not fail by the commission of sin.

8. That it should have been possible for Christ's holiness to fail, is not consistent with what God promised to his Son, before all ages. For, that salvation should be offered to men through Christ, and bestowed on all his faithful followers, is what is at least implied in that certain and infallible promise spoken of by the apostle, Tit. i. 2. "In hope of eternal life; which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." This does not seem to be controverted by *Arminians*.*

9. That it should be possible for Christ to fail of doing his Father's Will, is inconsitent with the promise made to the Father by the Son, by the *Logos* that was with the Father from the beginning, before he took the human nature: As may be seen in Psal. xl. 6, 7, 8, (compared with the Apostle's interpretation, Heb. x. 5.....9.) "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire: Mine ears hast thou opened, (or bored;) burnt offering and sin offering Thou hast not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: In the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy Will, O my God, and thy law is within my heart." Where is a manifest allusion to the covenant, which the willing servant, who loved his mas-

* See Dr. Whitby on the five Points, p. 48, 49, 50.

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ter's service, made with his master, to be his servant forever; on the day wherein he had his ear bored; which covenant was probably inserted in the public records, called the *Volume of the Book*, by the judges, who were called to take cognizance of the transaction; Exod. xxi. If the *Logos*, who was with the Father, before the world, and who made the world, thus engaged in covenant to do the Will of the Father in the human nature, and the promise was as it were recorded, that it might be made sure, doubtless it was *impossible* that it should fail; and so it was *impossible* that Christ should fail of doing the Will of the Father in the human nature.

10. If it was possible for Christ to have failed of doing the Will of his Father, and so to have failed of effectually working out redemption for sinners, then the salvation of all the saints, who were saved from the beginning of the world, to the death of Christ, was not built on a firm foundation. The Messiah, and the redemption which he was to work out by his obedience unto death, was the foundation of the salvation of all the posterity of fallen man, that ever were saved. Therefore, if when the Old Testament saints had the pardon of their sins, and the favor of God promised them, and salvation bestowed upon them, still it was possible that the Messiah, when he came, might commit sin, then all this was on a foundation that was not firm and stable, but liable to fail; something which it was possible might never be. God did as it were trust to what his Son had engaged and promised to do in future time; and depended so much upon it, that He proceeded actually to save men on the account of it, as though it had been already done. But this trust and dependence of God, on the supposition of Christ's being liable to fail of doing his Will, was leaning on a staff that was weak, and might possibly break.....The saints of old trusted in the promises of a future redemption to be wrought out and completed by the Messiah, and built their comfort upon it: Abraham saw Christ's day and rejoiced; and he and the other Patriarchs died in the faith of the promise of it.... (Heb. xi. 13.) But on this supposition, their faith and their comfort, and their salvation, was built on a moveable, fallible foundation; Christ was not to them a tried stone, a sure found-

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ation: As in Isa. xxviii. 16. David entirely rested on the covenant of God with him, concerning the future glorious dominion and salvation of the Messiah, of his seed; and says it was *all his salvation, and all his desire:* And comforts himself that this covenant was an "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure," 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. But if Christ's virtue might fail, he was mistaken: His great comfort was not built so sure as he thought it was, being founded entirely on the determinations of the Free Will of Christ's human Soul; which was subject to no necessity, and might be determined either one way or the other. Also the dependence of those, who looked for redemption in Jerusalem, and waited for the consolation of Israel, (Luke ii. 25, and 38) and the confidence of the disciples of Jesus, who forsook all and followed Him, that they might enjoy the benefits of his future kingdom, were built on a sandy foundation.

11. The man Christ Jesus, before he had finished his course of obedience, and while in the midst of temptations and trials, was abundant in positively predicting his own future glory in his kingdom, and the enlargement of his church, the salvation of the Gentiles through him, &c. and in promises of blessings he would bestow on his true disciples in his future kingdom; on which promises he required the full dependence of his disciples, (John xiv.) But the disciples would have had no ground for such dependence, if Christ had been liable to fail in his work: And Christ Himself would have been guilty of presumption, in so abounding in peremptory promises of great things, which depended on a mere contingence, viz. the determinations of his Free Will, consisting in a freedom *ad utrumque*, to either sin or holiness, standing in indifference, and indifferent, in thousands of future instances, to go either one way or the other.

Thus it is evident, that it was *impossible* that the Acts of the Will of the human soul of Christ should be otherwise than holy, and conformed to the Will of the Father; or, in other words, they were necessarily so conformed.

I have been the longer in the proof of this matter, it being a thing denied by some of the greatest *Arminians*, by Episco-

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pius in particular; and because I look upon it as a point clearly and absolutely determining the controversy between *Calvinists* and *Arminians*, concerning the necessity of such a freedom of Will as is insisted on by the latter, in order to moral agency, virtue, command or prohibition, promise or threatening, reward or punishment, praise or dispraise, merit or demerit. I now therefore proceed,

II. To consider whether CHRIST, in his holy behavior on earth, was not thus a *moral agent*, subject to *commands, promises*, &c.

Dr. Whitby very often speaks of what he calls a freedom *ad utrumlibet*, without necessity, as requisite to *law and commands*; and speaks of necessity as entirely inconsistent with *injunctions and prohibitions*. But yet we read of Christ's being the subject of the commands of his Father, Job x. 18, and xv. 10. And Christ tells us, that every thing he *said*, or *did*, was in compliance with *commandments he had received of the Father*; John xii. 49, 50, and xiv. 31. And we often read of Christ's *obedience* to his Father's commands, Rom. v. 19. Phil. ii. 8. Heb. v. 8.

The forementioned writer represents *promises offered as motives* to persons to do their duty, or *a being moved and induced by promises*, as utterly inconsistent with a state wherein persons have not a liberty *ad utrumlibet* but are necessarily determined to one. (See particularly, p. 298, 311.) But the thing which this writer asserts, is demonstrably false, if the Christian religion be true. If there be any truth in Christianity or the holy Scriptures, the man Christ Jesus had his Will infallibly, unalterably and unfrustrably determined to good, and that alone; but yet he had promises of glorious rewards made to Him, on condition of his persevering in, and perfecting the work which God had appointed Him; Isa. liii. 10, 11, 12, Psal. ii. and cx. Isa. xlix. 7, 8, 9. In Luke xxii. 28, 29, Christ says to his disciples, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." The word most properly signifies to appoint by covenant or

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promise. The plain meaning of Christ's words is this: "As you have partook of my temptations and trials, and have been stedfast, and have overcome, I promise to make you partakers of my reward, and to give you a kingdom; as the Father has promised me a kingdom for continuing stedfast, and overcoming in those trials." And the words are well explained by those in Rev. iii. 21. "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." And Christ had not only promises of glorious success and rewards made to his obedience and sufferings, but the Scriptures plainly represent him as using these promises for motives and inducements to obey and suffer; and particularly that promise of a kingdom which the Father had appointed Him, or sitting with the Father in his throne; as in Heb. xii. 1, 2. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

And how strange would it be to hear any Christian assert, that the holy and excellent temper and behavior of Jesus Christ, and that obedience which he performed under such great trials, was not *virtuous* or *praiseworthy*; because his Will was not free *ad utrumque*, to either holiness or sin, but was unalterably determined to one; that upon this account, there is no virtue at all, in all Christ's humility, meekness, patience, charity, forgiveness of enemies, contempt of the world, heavenly mindedness, submission to the will of God, perfect obedience to his commands, (though he was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross) his great compassion to the afflicted, his unparalleled love to mankind, his faithfulness to God and man, under such great trials; his praying for his enemies, even when nailing him to the cross; that *virtue*, when applied to these things, *is but an empty name*; that there was no merit in any of these things; that is, that Christ was *worthy* of nothing at all on account of them, wor-

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thy of no reward, no praise, no honor or respect from God or man; because his Will was not indifferent, and free, either to these things, or the contrary; but under such a strong inclination or bias to the things that were excellent, as made it *impossible* that he should choose the contrary; that upon this account (to use Dr. Whitby's language) *it would be sensibly unreasonable* that the human nature should be rewarded for any of these things.

According to this doctrine, that creature who is evidently set forth in scripture as the *first born* of *every creature*, as having *in all things the preeminence*, and as the highest of all creatures in virtue, honor, and worthiness of esteem, praise and glory, on the account of his virtue, is less worthy of reward or praise, than the very least of saints; yea, no more worthy than a clock or mere machine, that is purely passive, and moved by natural necessity.

If we judge by scriptural representations of things, we have reason to suppose, that Christ took upon him our nature, and dwelt with us in this world, in a suffering state, not only to satisfy for our sins, but that He, being in our nature and circumstances, and under our trials, might be our most fit and proper example, leader and captain, in the exercise of glorious and victorious virtue, and might be a visible instance of the glorious end and reward of it; that we might see in Him the beauty, amiableness, and true honor and glory, and exceeding benefit, of that virtue, which it is proper for us human beings to practise; and might thereby learn, and be animated, to seek the like glory and honor, and to obtain the like glorious reward. See Heb. ii. 9....14, with v. 8, 9, and xii. 1, 2, 3. John xv. 10. Rom. viii. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12. 1 Pet. ii. 19, 20, and iv. 13. But if there was nothing of any virtue or merit, or worthiness of any reward, glory, praise or commendation at all, in all that he did, because it was all necessary, and he could not help it; then how is here any thing so proper to animate and excite us, free creatures, by patient continuance in well doing, to seek for honor, glory, and immortality?

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God speaks of Himself as peculiarly well pleased with the righteousness of this servant of his. Isa. xlii. 21. "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake." The sacrifices of old are spoken of as a sweet savour to God, but the obedience of Christ as far more acceptable than they. Psal. xl. 6, 7. "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire: Mine ear hast Thou opened," [as thy servant performing willing obedience;] "burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required: Then said I, Lo, I come," [as a servant that cheerfully answers the calls of his master:] "I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy law is within mine heart." Matth. xvii. 5. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And Christ tells us expressly, that the Father loves him for that wonderful instance of his obedience, his voluntary yielding himself to death, in compliance with the Father's command. John x. 17, 18. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life: No man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of myself....This commandment received I my Father.

And if there was no merit in Christ's obedience unto death, if it was not worthy of praise, and of the most glorious rewards, the heavenly hosts were exceedingly mistaken, by the account that is given of them, in Rev. v. 8....12. "The four beasts and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors; and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art WORTHY to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain....And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, WORTHY is the lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

Christ speaks of the eternal life which he was to receive, as the reward of his obedience to the Father's commandments. John xii. 49, 50. "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment

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what I should say, and what I should speak; and I know that his commandment is life everlasting: Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." God promises to divide him a portion with the great, &c. for his being his righteous servant, for his glorious virtue under such great trials and sufferings. Isa. liii. 11, 12. "He shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied: By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death." The scriptures represent God as rewarding him far above all his other servants. Phil. ii. 7, 8, 9. "He took on him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name." Psal. xlv. 7. "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

There is no room to pretend, that the glorious benefits bestowed in consequence of Christ's obedience, are not properly of the nature of a reward. What is a reward, in the most proper sense, but a benefit bestowed in consequence of something morally excellent in quality or behavior, in testimony of well pleasedness in that moral excellency, and respect and favor on that account? If we consider the nature of a reward most strictly, and make the utmost of it, and add to the things contained in this description, proper merit or worthiness, and the bestowment of the benefit in consequence of a promise; still it will be found, there is nothing belonging to it, but that the scripture is most express as to its belonging to the glory bestowed on Christ, after his sufferings; as appears from what has been already observed: There was a glorious benefit bestowed in consequence of something morally excellent, being called *Righteousness* and *Obedience*; there was great favor, love and well pleasedness, for this righteousness and obedience, in the bestower; there was proper merit, or worthiness

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of the benefit, in the obedience; it was bestowed in fulfilment of promises made to that obedience; and was bestowed therefore, or because he had performed that obedience.

I may add to all these things, that Jesus Christ, while here in the flesh, was manifestly in a state of trial. The last Adam, as Christ is called, Rom. v. 14. 1 Cor. xv. 45, taking on Him the human nature, and so the form of a servant, and being under the law, to stand and act for us, was put into a state of trial, as the first Adam was....Dr. Whitby mentions these three things as evidences of persons being in a state of trial (on the five Points, p. 298, 299) namely, their afflictions being spoken of as their trials or temptations, their being the subjects of promises, and their being exposed to Satan's temptations. But Christ was apparently the subject of each of these. Concerning promises made to him, I have spoken already. The difficulties and afflictions he met with in the course of his obedience, are called his *temptations* or *trials*." Luke xxii. 28. "Ye are they which have continued with me in my *temptations* or *trials*." Heb. ii. 18. "For in that he himself hath suffered, being *tempted*, [*or tried*] He is able to succor them that are tempted." And chap. iv. 15. "We have not an high priest, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points *tempted* like as we are, yet without sin.". And as to his being tempted by Satan it is what none will dispute.

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SECTION III.

The Case of such as are given up of GOD to SIN, *and of* fallen MAN *in general, proves moral Necessity and Inability to be consistent with blameworthiness.*

DR. WHITBY asserts freedom, not only from coaction, but Necessity, to be essential to any thing deserving the name of Sin, and to an action's being *culpable*; in these words (Discourse on the five Points, edit. iii. p. 348.) "If they be thus necessitated, then neither their sins of omission or commission could deserve that name; it being essential to the nature of Sin, according to St. Austin's definition, that it be an action *a quo liberum est abstinere*. Three things seem plainly necessary to make an action or omission culpable. 1. That it be in our power to perform or forbear it; for, as Origen, and all the Fathers say, no man is blameworthy for not doing what he could not do." And elsewhere the Doctor insists, that "when any do evil of Necessity, what they do is no vice, that they are guilty of no fault,* are worthy of no blame, dispraise,† or dishonor,‡ but are unblamable.§"

If these things are true, in Dr. Whitby's sense of Necessity, they will prove all such to be blameless, who are given up of God to sin, in what they commit after they are thus given up. That there is such a thing as men's being judicially given up to sin is certain, if the scripture rightly informs us; such a thing being often there spoken of; as in Psal. lxxxi. 12. "So I gave them up to their own hearts' lust, and they walked in their own counsels." Acts vii. 42. "Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven." Rom. i. 24. "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their

* Discourse on the Five Points, p. 347, 360, 361, 377. † 303, 326, 329, and many other places. ‡ 371. § 304, 361.

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own bodies between themselves." Ver. 26. "For this cause God gave them up to vile affections." Ver. 28. "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things that are not convenient.

It is needless to stand particularly to inquire, what God's *giving men up to their own hearts' lusts* signifies: It is sufficient to observe, that hereby is certainly meant God's so ordering or disposing things, in some respect or other, either by doing or forbearing to do, as that the consequence should be men's continuing in their sins. So much as men are given up to, so much is the consequence of their being given up, whether that be less or more. If God does not order things so, by action or permission, that sin will be the consequence, then the event proves that they are not given up to that consequence. If good be the consequence, instead of evil, then God's mercy is to be acknowledged in that good; which mercy must be contrary to God's judgment in giving up to evil. If the event must prove, that they are given up to evil as the consequence, then the persons, who are the subjects of this judgment, must be the subjects of such an event, and so the event is necessary.

If not only *coaction*, but all *Necessity*, will prove men blameless, then Judas was blameless, after Christ had given him over, and had already declared his certain damnation, and that he should *verily* betray him. He was guilty of no sin in betraying his master, on this supposition; though his so doing is spoken of by Christ as the most aggravated sin, more heinous than the sin of Pilate in crucifying him. And the Jews in Egypt, in Jeremiah's time, were guilty of no sin, in their not worshipping the true God, after God had *sworn by his great name, that his name should be no more named in the mouth of any man of Judah, in all the land of Egypt*.....Jer. xliv. 26.

Dr. Whitby (Discourse on Five Points, p. 302, 303) denies, that men, in this world, are ever so given up by God to sin, that their Wills should be necessarily determined to evil; though he owns, that hereby it may become *exceeding*

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difficult for men to do good, having a strong bent, and powerful inclination, to what is evil....But if we should allow the case to be just as he represents, the judgment of giving up to sin will no better agree with his notions of that liberty, which is essential to praise or blame, than if we should suppose it to render the avoiding of Sin *impossible*. For if an *impossibility* of avoiding Sin wholly excuses a man; then, for the same reason, its being difficult to avoid it, excuses him in part; and this just in proportion to the degree of difficulty....If the influence of moral impossibility or inability be the same, to excuse persons in not doing, or not avoiding any thing, as that of *natural* inability, (which is supposed) then undoubtedly, in like manner, *moral difficulty* has the same influence to excuse with *natural difficulty*. But all allow, that natural impossibility wholly excuses, and also that *natural difficulty* excuses in part, and makes the act or omission less blameable in proportion to the difficulty. All *natural difficulty* according to the plainest dictates of the light of nature, excuses in some degree, so that the neglect is not so blameable, as if there had been no difficulty in the case: And so the greater the difficulty is, still the more excuseable, in proportion to the increase of the difficulty. And as *natural* impossibility wholly excuses and excludes all blame, so the nearer the difficulty approaches to impossibility, still the nearer a person is to blamelessness in proportion to that approach. And if the case of moral impossibility or necessity, be just the same with natural necessity or coaction, as to influence to excuse a neglect, then also, for the same reason, the case of natural difficulty, does not differ in influence, to excuse a neglect, from moral difficulty, arising from a strong bias or bent to evil, such as Dr. Whitby owns in the case of those that are given up to their own hearts' lusts. So that the fault of such persons must be lessened, in proportion to the difficulty, and approach to impossibility. If ten degrees of moral difficulty make the action quite impossible, and so wholly excuse, then if there be nine degrees of difficulty, the person is in great part excused, and is nine degrees in ten, less blameworthy, than if there had been no difficulty at all; and he has but one

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degree of blameworthiness. The reason is plain on *Arminian* principles, viz. because as difficulty by antecedent bent and bias on the Will, is increased, liberty of indifference, and so determination in the Will, is diminished; so much hinderance and impediment is there, in the way of the Will's acting freely, by mere selfdetermination. And if ten degrees of such hinderance take away all such liberty, then nine degrees take away nine parts in ten, and leave but one degree of liberty. And therefore there is but one degree of blameableness, *cæteris paribus*, in the neglect; the man being no further blameable in what he does, or neglects, than he has liberty in that affair: For blame or praise (say they) arises wholly from a good use or abuse of liberty.

From all which it follows, that a strong bent and bias one way, and difficuly of going the contrary, never causes a person to be at all more exposed to sin, or any thing blameable: Because, as the difficulty is increased, so much the less is required and expected. Though in one respect, exposedness to sin or fault increased, viz. by an increase of exposedness to the evil action or omission; yet it is diminished in an other respect, to balance it; namely, as the sinfulness or blameableness of the action or omission is diminished in the same proportion. So that, on the whole, affair, as to exposedness to guilt or blame, is left just as it was.

To illustrate this, let us suppose a scale of a balance to be intelligent, and a free agent, and indued with a selfmoving power, by virtue of which it could act and produce effects to a certain degree, *ex. gr.* to move itself up or down with a force equal to a weight of ten pounds; and that it might therefore be required of it, in ordinary circumstances, to move itself down with that force; for which it has power and full liberty, and therefore would be blameworthy if it failed of it. But then let us suppose a weight of ten pounds to be put in the opposite scale, which in force entirely counterbalances its selfmoving power, and so renders it impossible for it to move down at all; and therefore wholly excuses it from any such motion. But if we suppose there to be only nine pounds in the opposite scale, this renders its motion not im-

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possible, but yet more difficult: So that it can now only move down with the force of one pound: But however this is all that is required of it under these cirumstances; it is wholly excused from nine parts of its motion: And if the scale, under these circumstances, neglects to move, and remains at rest, all that it will be blamed for, will be its neglect of that one tenth part of its motion; which it had as much liberty and advantage for as in usual circumstances, it has for the greater motion, which in such a case would be required. So that this new difficulty, does not at all increase its exposedness to any thing blameworthy.

And thus the very supposition of difficulty in the way of a man's duty, or proclivity to sin, through a being given up to hardness of heart, or indeed by any other means whatsoever, is an inconsistence, according to Dr. Whitby's notions of liberty, virtue and vice, blame and praise. The avoiding sin and blame, and the doing what is virtuous and praiseworthy, must be always equally easy.

Dr. Whitby's notions of liberty, obligation, virtue, sin, &c. led him into another great inconsistence. He abundantly insists, that necessity is inconsistent with the nature of sin or fault. He says, in the forementioned treatise, p. 14. "Who can blame a person for doing what he could not help?" And p. 15. "It being sensibly unjust, to punish any man for doing that which was never in his power to avoid." And in p. 341, to confirm his opinion, he quotes one of the Fathers, saying. "Why doth God command, if man hath not free Will and power to obey?" And again in the same and the next page, "Who will not cry out, that it is folly to command him, that hath not liberty to do what is commanded; and that it is unjust to condemn him, that has it not in his power to do what is required?" And in p. 373, he cites another saying. "A law is given to him that can turn to both parts, i. e. obey or transgress it: But no law can be against him who is bound by nature."

And yet the same Dr. Whitby asserts, that fallen man is not able to perform perfect obedience. In p. 165, he has these words: "The nature of Adam had power to continue

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innocent, and without sin; whereas it is certain our nature never had so."... But if we have not power to continue innocent and without sin, then sin is consistent with Necessity, and we may be sinful in that which we have not power to avoid; and those things cannot be true which he asserts elsewhere, namely, "That if we be necessitated, neither sins of omission nor commission, would deserve that name," (p. 348.) If we have it not in our power to be innocent, then we have it not in our power to be blameless: And if so, we are under a necessity of being blameworthy.....And how does this consist with what he so often asserts, that necessity is inconsistent with blame or praise? If we have it not in our power to perform perfect obedience, to all the commands of God, then we are under a necessity of breaking some commands, in some degree; having no power to perform so much as is commanded. And if so, why does he cry out of the unreasonableness and folly of commanding beyond what men have power to do?

And Arminians in general are very inconsistent with themselves in what they say of the inability of fallen Man in this respect. They strenuously maintain, that it would be unjust in God, to require any thing of us beyond our present power and ability to perform; and also hold, that we are now unable to perform perfect obedience, and that Christ died to satisfy for the *imperfections of our obedience*, and has made way, that our imperfect obedience might be accepted instead of perfect: Wherein they seem insensibly to run themselves into the grossest inconsistence. For, (as I have observed elsewhere) "they hold, that God, in mercy to mankind, has abolished that rigorous constitution or law, that they were under originally; and instead of it, has introduced a more mild constitution, and put us under a new law, which requires no more than imperfect sincere obedience, in compliance with our poor, infirm, impotent circumstances since the fall."

Now, how can these things be made consistent? I would ask, what law these imperfections of our obedience are a breach of? If they are a breach of no law that we were ever under, then they are not sins. And if they be not sins, what

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need of Christ's dying to satisfy for them? But if they are sins, and the breach of some law, what law is it? They cannot be a breach of their new law; for that requires no other than imperfect obedience, or obedience with imperfections: And therefore to have obedience attended with imperfections, is no breach of it; for it as much as it requires. And they cannot be a breach of their old law; for that, they say, is entirely abolished; and we never were under it. They say, it would not be just in God to require of us perfect obedience, because it would not be just to require more than we can perform, or to punish us for failing of it. And therefore, by their own scheme, the imperfections of our obedience do not deserve to be punished. What need therefore of Christ's dying, to satisfy for them? What need of his *suffering* to satisfy for that which is no fault, and in its own nature deserves no *suffering?* What need of Christ's dying, to purchase, that our *imperfect* obedience should be accepted, when, according to their scheme, it would be unjust in itself, that any other obedience, than *imperfect* should be required? What need of Christ's dying to make way for God's accepting such an obedience, as it would be unjust in him not to accept? Is there any need of Christ's dying, to prevail with God not to do unrighteously? If it be said, that Christ died to satisfy that old law for us, that so we might not be under it, but that there might be room for our being under a more mild law; still I would inquire, what need of Christ's dying, that we might not be under a law, which (by their principles) it would be in itself unjust that we should be under, whether Christ had died or no, because, in our present state, we are not able to keep it?

So the *Arminians* are inconsistent with themselves, not only in what they say of the need of Christ's satisfaction to atone for those imperfections, which we cannot avoid, but also in what they say of the grace of God, granted to enable men to perform the sincere obedience of the new law. "I grant, (says Dr. Stebbing*) indeed, that by reason of original sin, we are utterly disabled for the performance of the condition,

* Treatise of the Operations of the Spirit, second edition, page 112, 113.

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without new grace from God. But I say then, that he gives such a grace to all of us, by which the performance of the condition is truly possible: And upon this ground he may, and doth most righteously require it." If Dr. Stebbing intends to speak properly, by *grace* he must mean, that assistance which is of grace, or of free favor and kindness. But yet in the same place he speaks of it as very *unreasonable*, *unjust* and *cruel*, for God to require that, as the condition of pardon, that is become impossible by original Sin. If it be so, what *grace* is there in giving assistance and ability to perform the condition of pardon? Or why is that called by the name of grace, that is an absolute debt, which God is bound to bestow, and which it would be unjust and cruel in Him to withhold, seeing he requires that, *as the condition of pardon*, which he cannot perform without it.

SECTION IV.

Command *and* Obligation *to* Obedience, *consistent with moral Inability to obey.*

IT being so much insisted on by *Arminian* writers, that necessity is inconsistent with Law or Command, and particularly, that it is absurd to suppose God by his command should require that of men which they are unable to do; not allowing in this case for any difference that there is between natural and moral Inability; I would therefore now particularly consider this matter.

And, for the greater clearness, I would distinctly lay down the following things.

I. The Will itself, and not only these actions which are the effects of the Will, is the proper object of precept or Command. That is, such or such a state or acts of men's

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Wills, is in many cases, properly required of them by Command; and not those alterations in the state of their bodies or minds only that are the consequences of volition. This is most manifest; for it is the soul only that is properly and directly the subject of precepts or commands; that only being capable of receiving or perceiving commands. The motions or state of the body are matter of command, only as they are subject to the soul, and connected with its acts. But now the soul has no other faculty whereby it can, in the most direct and proper sense, consent, yield to, or comply with any command, but the faculty of the Will; and it is by this faculty only, that the soul can directly disobey, or refuse compliance; for the very notions of *consenting*, *yielding*, *accepting*, *complying*, *refusing*, *rejecting*, &c. are, according to the meaning of the terms, nothing but certain acts of the Will. Obedience, in the primary nature of it, is the submitting and yielding of the Will of one to the Will of another. Disobedience is the not consenting, not complying of the Will of the commanded to the manifested Will of the commander. Other acts that are not the acts of the Will, as certain motions of the body and alterations in the soul, are obedience or disobedience only indirectly as they are connected with the state or acts of the Will, according to an established law of nature. So that it is manifest, the Will itself may be required, and the being of a good Will is the most proper, direct and immediate subject of command; and if this cannot be prescribed or required by command or precept, nothing can; for other things can be required no otherwise than as they depend upon, and are the fruits of a good Will.

Corol. 1. If there be several acts of the Will, or a series of acts, one following another, and one the effect of another, the first and determining act is properly the subject of command, and not the consequent acts only, which are dependent upon it. Yea, it is this more especially, which is that, which command or precept has a proper respect to; because it is this act that determines the whole affair: In this act the obedience or disobedience lies, in a peculiar manner; the consequent acts being all subject to it, and governed and deter-

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mined by it. This determining, governing act must be the proper subject of precept, or none.

Corol. 2. It also follows, from what has been observed, that if there be any sort of act, or exertion of the soul, prior to all free acts of the Will or acts of choice in the case directing and determining what the acts of the Will shall be; that act or exertion of the soul cannot properly be subject to command or precept, in any respect whatsoever, either directly or indirectly, immediately or remotely. Such acts cannot be subject to commands *directly*, because they are no acts of the Will; being by the supposition prior to all acts of the Will, determining and giving rise to all its acts: They not being acts of the Will, there can be in them no consent to, or compliance with, any command. Neither can they be subject to command, or precept *indirectly* or *remotely*; for they are not so much as the *effects* or *consequences* of the Will, being prior to all its acts. So that if there be any obedience in that original act of the soul, determining all volitions, it is an act of obedience wherein the Will has no concern at all; it preceding every act of Will. And therefore, if the soul either obeys or disobeys in this act, it is wholly involuntarily; there is no willing obedience or rebellion, no compliance or opposition of the Will in the affair; And what sort of obedience or rebellion is this?

And thus the Arminian notion of the freedom of the Will consisting in the soul's determining its own acts of Will, instead of being essential to moral agency, and to men's being the subjects of moral government is utterly inconsistent with it. For if the soul determines all its acts of Will, it is therein subject to no command or moral government, as has been now observed; because its original determining act is no act of Will or choice, it being prior, by the supposition, to *every act* of Will. And the soul cannot be the subject of command in the act of the Will itself which depends on the foregoing determining act, and is determined by it; inasmuch as this is necessary, being the necessary consequence and effect of that prior determining act, which is not voluntary. Nor can the man be a subject of command or government in his

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external actions; because these are all necessary, being the necessary effects of the acts of the Will themselves. So that mankind, according to this scheme, are subjects of command or moral government in nothing; and all their moral agency is entirely excluded, and no room for virtue or vice in the world.

So that it is the Arminian scheme, and not the scheme of the Calvinists, that is utterly inconsistent with moral government, and with the use of laws, precepts, prohibitions, promises or threatenings. Neither is there any way whatsoever to make their principles consist with these things. For if it be said, that there is no prior determining act of the soul, preceding the acts of the Will, but that volitions are events that come to pass by pure accident, without any determining cause, this is most palpably inconsistent with all use of laws and precepts; for nothing is more plain than that laws can be of no use to direct and regulate perfect accident: Which, by the supposition of its being pure accident, is in no case regulated by any thing preceding; but happens, this way or that, perfectly by chance, without any cause or rule. The perfect uselessness of laws and precepts also follows from the *Arminian* notion of indifference, as essential to that liberty, which is requisite to virtue or vice. For the end of laws is to *bind to one side*; and the end of commands is to turn the Will one way; and therefore they are of no use, unless they turn or bias the Will that way. But if liberty consists in indifference, then their biassing the Will one way only, destroys liberty; as it puts the Will out of equilibrium. So that the Will, having a bias, through the influence of binding law, laid upon it, is not wholly left to itself, to determine itself which way it will, without influence from without.

II. Having shewn that the Will itself, especially in those acts, which are original, leading and determining in any case, is the proper subject of precept and command, and not only those alterations in the body, &c. which are the effects of the Will; I now proceed, in the *second* place, to observe that the very opposition or defect of the Will itself, in that act, which is its *original and determining act* in the case;

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I say, the Will's opposition *in this act* to a thing proposed or commanded, or its failing of compliance, implies a moral Inability to that thing: Or, in other words, whenever a command requires a certain state or act of the Will, and the person commanded, notwithstanding the command and the circumstances under which it is exhibited, still finds his Will opposite or wanting, in *that*, belonging to its state or acts, *which is original and determining in the affair*, that man is morally unable to obey that command.

This is manifest from what was observed in the first part, concerning the nature of *moral* Inability, as distinguished from *natural*; where it was observed, that a man may then be said to be morally unable to do a thing, when he is under the influence or prevalence of a contrary inclination, or has a want of inclination, under such circumstances and views. It is also evident, from what has been before proved, that the Will is always, and in every individual act, necessarily determined by the strongest motive; and so is always unable to go against the motive, which, all things considered, has now the greatest strength and advantage to move the Will....But not further to insist on these things, the truth of the position now laid down, viz. that when the Will is opposite *to*, or, failing of a compliance with a thing *in its original, determining inclination or act*, it is not able to comply, appears by the consideration of these two things.

1. The Will in the time of that diverse or opposite leading act or inclination, and when actually under the influence of it, is not able to exert itself to the contrary, to make an alteration, in order to a compliance. The inclination is unable to change itself; and that for this plain reason, that it is unable to *incline* to change itself. Present choice cannot at present choose to be otherwise: For that would be *at present* to choose some thing diverse from what is *at present* chosen. If the Will, all things now considered, inclines or chooses to go that way, then it cannot choose, all things now considered, to go the other way, and so cannot choose to be made to go the other way. To suppose that the mind is now sincerely inclined to change itself to a different inclination, is to suppose the

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mind is now truly inclined otherwise than it is now inclined. The Will may oppose some future remote act that it is exposed to, but not its own present act.

2. As it is impossible that the Will should comply with the thing commanded, with respect to its *leading act*, by any act of its own, in the time of that diverse or opposite *leading and original act*, or after it has actually come under the influence of that *determining choice or inclination*; so it is impossible it should be determined to a compliance by any foregoing act; for, by the very supposition, there is no foregoing act; the opposite or noncomplying act being that act which is *original* and *determining* in the case. Therefore it must be so, that if this *first determining act* be found noncomplying, on the proposal of the command, the mind is morally unable to obey. For to suppose it to be able to obey, is to suppose it to be able to determine and cause its *first determining act* to be otherwise, and that it has power better to govern and regulate its *first governing and regulating act*, which is absurd; for it is to suppose a prior act of the Will, determining its first determining act; that is, an act prior to the first, and leading and governing the original and governing act of all; which is a contradiction.

Here if it should be said, that although the mind has not any ability to Will contrary to what it does Will, in the original and leading act of the Will, because there is supposed to be no prior act to determine and order it otherwise, and the Will cannot immediately change itself, because it cannot at present incline to a change; yet the mind has an ability for the present to *forbear* to proceed to action, and to take time for deliberation; which may be an occasion of the change of the inclination,

I answer, (1.) In this objection that seems to be forgotten which was observed before, viz. that the determining to take the matter into consideration, is itself an act of the Will; and if this be all the act wherein the mind exercises ability and freedom, then this, by the supposition, must be all that can be commanded or required by precept. And if this act be the commanded act, then all that has been observed concerning the commanded act of the Will remains true, that

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the very want of it is a moral Inability to exert it, &c. (2.) We are speaking concerning the first and leading act of the Will in the case, or about the affair; and if a determining to deliberate, or on the contrary, to proceed immediately without deliberating, be the first and leading act; or whether it be or no, if there be another act before it, which determines that; or whatever be the original and leading act; still the foregoing proof stands good, that the noncompliance of the leading act implies moral Inability to comply.

If it should be objected, that these things make all moral Inability equal, and suppose men morally unable to Will otherwise than they actually do Will, in all cases, and equally so in every instance.

In answer to this objection, I desire two things may be observed. *First*, That if by being *equally* unable, be meant as *really* unable; then, so far as the Inability is merely moral, it is true, the Will, in every instance, acts by moral necessity and is morally unable to act otherwise, as truly and properly in one case as another; as I humbly conceive has been perfectly and abundantly demonstrated by what has been said in the preceding part of this Essay. But yet, in some respect, the Inability may be said to be greater in some instances than others; though the man may be truly unable, (if moral Inability can truly be called Inability) yet he may be further from being able to do some things than others. As it is in things, which men are naturally unable to do....A person, whose strength is no more than sufficient to lift the weight of one hundred pounds, is as truly and really unable to lift one hundred and one pounds, as ten thousand pounds; but yet he is further from being able to lift the latter weight than the former; and so, according to common use of speech, has a greater Inability for it. So it is in moral Inability. A man is truly morally unable to choose contrary to a present inclination, which in the least degree prevails; or, contrary to that motive, which, all things considered, has strength and advantage now to move the Will, in the least degree, superior to all other motives in view; but yet he is further from ability to resist a very strong habit, and a violent and deeply root-

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ed inclination, or a motive vastly exceeding all others in strength. And again, the Inability may, in some respects, be called greater in some instances than others, as it may be more general and extensive to all acts of that kind. So men may be said to be unable in a different sense, and to be further from moral ability, who have that moral Inability which is *general* and *habitual*, than they who have only that Inability which is *occasional* and *particular*.* Thus in cases of natural Inability; he that is born blind may be said to be unable to see, in a different manner, and is, in some respects, further from being able to see, than he whose sight is hindered by a transient cloud or mist.

And besides, that which was observed in the first part of this discourse, concerning the Inability which attends a *strong and settled habit*, should be here remembered, viz. that fixed habit is attended with this peculiar moral Inability, by which it is distinguished from *occasional volition*, namely, that endeavors to avoid future volitions of that kind, which are agreeable to such a habit, much more frequently and commonly prove vain and insufficient. For though it is impossible there should be any true, sincere desires and endeavors against a present volition or choice, yet there may be against volitions of that kind, when viewed at a distance. A person may desire and use means to prevent future exercises of a certain inclination; and, in order to it, may wish the habit might be removed; but his desires and endeavors may be ineffectual. The man may be said in some sense to be unable; yea, even as the word *unable* is a *relative term*, and has relation to ineffectual endeavors; yet not with regard to present, but remote endeavors.

Secondly, It must be borne in mind, according to what was observed before, that indeed no Inability whatsoever, which is merely moral, is properly called by the name of *Inability*; and that in the strictest propriety of speech, a man may be said to have a thing in his power, if he has it at his election; and he cannot be said to be unable to do a thing, when he can, if

* See this distinction of moral Inability explained in Part I. Sect. IV.

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he now pleases, or whenever he has a proper, direct and immediate desire for it. As to those desires and endeavors, that may be against the exercises of a strong habit, with regard to which men may be said to be unable to avoid those exercises, they are remote desires and endeavors in two respects. *First*, as to *time*; they are never against present volitions, but only against volitions of such a kind, when viewed at a distance. *Secondly*, as to their *nature*; these opposite desires are not directly and properly against the habit and inclination itself, or the volitions in which it is exercised; for these, in themselves considered, are agreeable; but against something else, that attends them, or is their consequence; the opposition of the mind is levelled entirely against this; the inclination or volitions themselves are not at all opposed directly, and for their own sake; but only indirectly and remotely on the account of something alien and foreign.

III. Though the opposition of the Will itself, or the very want of Will to a thing commanded, implies a moral Inability to that thing; yet, if it be, as has been already shewn, that the being of a good state or act of Will, is a thing most properly required by command; then, in some cases, such a state or act of Will may properly be required, which at present is not, and which may also be wanting after it is commanded. And therefore those things may properly be commanded, which men have a moral Inability for.

Such a state, or act of the Will, may be required by command, as does not already exist. For if that volition only may be commanded to be which already is, there could be no use of precept; commands in all cases would be perfectly vain and impertinent. And not only may such a Will be required, as is wanting before the command is given, but also such as may possibly be wanting afterwards; such as the exhibition of the command may not be effectual to produce or excite.... Otherwise, no such things as disobedience to a proper and rightful command is possible in any case; and there is no case supposable or possible, wherein there can be an inexcusable or faulty disobedience; which *Arminians* cannot affirm consistently with their principles: For this makes obedience

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to just and proper commands always *necessary*, and Disobedience impossible. And so the *Arminian* would overthrow himself, yielding the very point we are upon, which he so strenuously denies, viz. that law and command are consistent with necessity.

If merely that Inability will excuse disobedience, which is implied in the opposition or defect of inclination, remaining after the command is exhibited, then wickedness always carries that in it which excuses it. It is evermore so, that by how much the more wickedness there is in a man's heart, by so much is his inclination to evil the stronger, and by so much the more, therefore, has he of moral Inability to the good required. His moral Inability, consisting in the strength of his evil inclination, is the very thing wherein his wickedness consists; and yet, according to *Arminian* principles, it must be a thing inconsistent with wickedness; and by how much the more he has of it, by so much is he the further from wickedness.

Therefore, on the whole, it is manifest, that moral Inability alone (which consists in disinclination, never renders any thing improperly the subject matter of precept or command, and never can excuse any person in disobedience, or want of conformity to a command.

Natural Inability, arising from the want of natural capacity, or external hinderance, (which alone is properly called Inability) without doubt wholly excuses, or makes a thing improperly the matter of command. If men are excused from doing or acting any good thing, supposed to be commanded, it must be through some defect or obstacle that is not in the Will itself, but extrinsic to it; either in the capacity of understanding, or body, or outward circumstances.

Here two or three things may be observed,

1. As to spiritual duties or acts, or any good thing in the state or immanent acts of the Will itself, or of the affections, (which are only certain modes of the exercise of the Will) if persons are justly excused, it must be through want of capacity in the natural faculty of understanding. Thus the same spiritual duties, or holy affections and exercises of heart, can-

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not be required of men, as may be of angels; the capacity of understanding being so much inferior. So men cannot be required to love those amiable persons, whom they have had no opportunity to see, or hear of, or come to the knowledge of, in any way agreeable to the natural state and capacity of the human understanding. But the insufficiency of motives will not excuse; unless their being insufficient arises not from the moral state of the Will or inclination itself, but from the state of the natural understanding. The great kindness and generosity of another may be a motive insufficient to excite gratitude in the person, that receives the kindness, through his vile and ungrateful temper: In this case, the insufficiency of the motive arises from the state of the Will or inclination of heart, and does not at all excuse. But if this generosity is not sufficient to excite gratitude, being unknown, there being no means of information adequate to the state and measure of the person's faculties, this insufficiency is attended with a natural Inability which entirely excuses.

2. As to such motions of body, or exercises and alterations of mind, which do not consist in the immanent acts or state of the Will itself, but are supposed to be required as effects of the Will; I say, in such supposed effects of the Will, in cases wherein there is no want of a capacity of understanding; that Inability, and that only excuses, which consists in want of connexion between them and the Will. If the Will fully complies, and the proposed effect does not prove, according to the laws of nature, to be connected with his volition, the man is perfectly excused; he has a natural Inability to the thing required. For the Will itself, as has been observed, is all that can be directly and immediately required by Command; and other things only indirectly, as connected with the Will. If, therefore, there be a full compliance of Will, the person has done his duty; and if other things do not prove to be connected with his volition, that is not owing to him.

3. Both these kinds of natural Inability that have been mentioned, and so all Inability that excuses, may be resolved into one thing, namely, want of natural capacity or strength;

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either capacity of understanding, or external strength. For when there are external defects and obstacles, they would be no obstacles, were it not for the imperfection and limitations of understanding and strength.

Coroh. If things for which men have a moral Inability, may properly be the matter of precept or command, then they may also of invitation and counsel. Commands and invitations come very much to the same thing; the difference is only circumstantial: Commands are as much a manifestation of the Will of him that speaks, as invitations, and as much testimonies of expectation of compliance. The difference between them lies in nothing that touches the affair in hand. The main difference between command and invitation consists in the enforcement of the Will of him who commands or invites. In the latter it is his *kindness*, the goodness which his Will arises from: In the former it is his *authority*. But whatever be the ground of the Will of him that speaks, or the enforcement of what he says, yet, seeing neither his Will nor expectation is any more testified in the one case than the other; therefore a person's being known to be morally unable to do the thing to which he is directed *by Invitation*, is no more an evidence of insincerity in him that directs in manifesting either a Will, or expectation which he has not, than his being known to be morally unable to do what he is directed to *by command*. So that all this grand objection of *Arminians* against the Inability of fallen men to exert faith in Christ, or to perform other spiritual gospel duties, from the sincerity of God's counsels and invitations, must be without force.

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SECTION V.

That Sincerity of Desires and Endeavors, *which is supposed to* excuse *in the Nonperformance of Things in themselves good, particularly considered.*

IT is what is much insisted on by many, that some men, though they are not able to perform spiritual duties, such as repentance of sin, love of God, a cordial acceptance of Christ as exhibited and offered in the gospel, &c. yet they may sincerely desire and endeavor these things; and therefore must be excused; it being unreasonable to blame them for the omission of those things, which they sincerely desire and endeavor to do, but cannot do.

Concerning this matter, the following things may be observed.

1. What is here supposed, is a great mistake and gross absurdity; even that men may sincerely choose and desire those spiritual duties of love, acceptance, choice, rejection, &c. consisting in the exercise of the Will itself, or in the disposition and inclination of the heart; and yet not be able to perform or exert them. This is absurd, because it is absurd to suppose that a man should directly, properly and sincerely incline to have an inclination, which at the same time is contrary to his inclination: For that is to suppose him not to be inclined to that, to which he is inclined. If a man, in the state and acts of his Will and inclination, does properly and directly fall in with those duties, he therein performs them: For the duties themselves consist in that very thing; they consist in the state and acts of the Will being so formed and directed. If the soul properly and sincerely falls in with a certain proposed act of Will or choice, the soul therein makes that choice its own. Even as when a moving body falls in with a proposed direction of its motion, that is the same thing as to move in that direction.

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2. That which is called a *desire* and *willingness* for these inward duties, in such as do not perform them, has repect to these duties only indirectly and remotely, and is improperly represented as a willingness for them; not only because (as was observed before) it respects those good volitions only in a distant view, and with respect to future time; but also because evermore, not these things themselves, but something else, that is alien and foreign, is the object that terminates these volitions and desires.

A drunkard, who continues in his drunkenness, being under the power of a love, and violent appetite to strong drink, and without any love to virtue; but being also extremely covetous and close, and very much exercised and grieved at the diminution of his estate, and prospect of poverty, may in a sort *desire* the virtue of temperance; and though his present Will is to gratify his extravagant appetite, yet he may wish he had a heart to forbear future acts of intemperence, and forsake his excesses, through an unwillingness to part with his money: But still he goes on with his drunkenness; his wishes and endeavors are insufficient and ineffectual: Such a man has no proper, direct, sincere willingness to forsake this vice, and the vicious deeds which belong to it: For he acts voluntarily in continuing to drink to excess: His desire is very improperly called a willingness to be temperate; it is no true desire of that virtue; for it is not that virtue, that terminates his wishes; nor have they any direct respect to it. It is only *the saving his money*, and avoiding poverty, that terminates and exhausts the whole strength of his desire. The virtue of temperance is regarded only very indirectly and improperly, even as a necessary means of gratifying the vice of covetousness.

So a man of an exceeding corrupt and wicked heart, who has no love to God and Jesus Christ, but, on the contrary, being very profanely and carnally inclined, has the greatest distaste of the things of religion, and enmity against them; yet being of a family, that from one generation to another, have most of them died, in youth, of an hereditary consumption; and so having little hope of living long; and having been im-

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structed in the necessity of a supreme love to Christ, and gratitude for his death and sufferings, in order to his salvation from eternal misery; if under these circumstances he should, through fear of eternal torments, wish he had such a disposition: But his profane and carnal heart remaining, he continues still in his habitual distaste of, and enmity to God and religion, and wholly without any exercise of that love and gratitude, (as doubtless the very devils themselves, notwithstanding all the devilishness of their temper, would wish for a holy heart, if by that means they could get out of hell:) In this case, there is no sincere willingness to love Christ and choose him as his chief good: These holy dispositions and exercises are not at all the direct object of the Will: they truly share no part of the inclination or desire of the soul; but all is terminated on deliverence from torment: And these graces and pious volitions, notwithstanding this forced consent, are looked upon as undesirable; as when a sick man desires a dose he greatly abhors, to save his life.....From these things it appears,

3. That this indirect willingness which has been spoken of, is not that exercise of the Will which the command requires; but is entirely a different one; being a volition of a different nature, and terminated altogether on different objects; wholly falling short of that virtue of Will, which the command has respect to.

4. This other volition, which has only some indirect concern with the duty required, cannot excuse for the want of that good will itself, which is commanded; being not the thing which answers and fulfils the command, and being wholly destitute of the virtue which the command seeks.

Further to illustrate this matter.....If a child has a most excellent father, that has ever treated him with fatherly kindness and tenderness, and has every way, in the highest degree merited his love and dutiful regard, being withal very wealthy; but the son is of so vile a disposition, that he inveterately hates his father; and yet, apprehending that his hatred of him is like to prove his ruin, by bringing him finally to poverty and abject circumstances, through his father's

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disinheriting him, or otherwise; which is exceeding cross to his avarice and ambition; he therefore, wishes it were otherwise: But yet, remaining under the invincible power of his vile and malignant disposition, he continues still in his settled hatred of his father. Now, if such a son's indirect willingness to have love and honor towards his father, at all acquits or excuses before God, for his failing of actually exercising these dispositions towards him, which God requires, it must be on one of these accounts. (1.) Either that it answers and fulfils the command. But this it does not by the supposition; because the thing commanded is love and honor to his worthy parent. If the command be proper and just, as is supposed, then it obliges to the thing commanded; and so nothing else but that can answer the obligation. Or, (2.) It must be at least, because there is that virtue or goodness in his indirect willingness, that is equivalent to the virtue required; and so balances or countervails it, and makes up for the want of it. But that also is contrary to the supposition. The willingness the son has merely from regard to money and honor, has no goodness in it, to countervail the want of the pious filial respect required.

Sincerity and reality, in that indirect willingness, which has been spoken of does not make it the better. That which is real and hearty is often called sincere; whether it be in virtue or vice. Some persons are sincerely *bad*; others are sincerely *good*; and others may be sincere and hearty in things, which are in their own nature *indifferent*; as a man may be sincerely desirous of eating when he is hungry. But a being sincere, hearty and in good earnest, is no virtue, unless it be in a thing that is virtuous. A man may be sincere and hearty in joining a crew of pirates, or a gang of robbers. When the devils cried out, and besought Christ not to torment them, it was no mere pretence; they were very hearty in their desires not to be tormented; but this did not make their Will or desires virtuous....And if men have sincere desires, which are in their kind and nature no better, it can be no excuse for the want of any required virtue.

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And as a man's being sincere in such an indirect desire or *willingness* to do his duty, as has been mentioned, cannot excuse for the want of performance; so it is with *endeavors* arising from such a willingness. The endeavors can have no more goodness in them, than the Will which they are the effect and expression of. And, therefore, however sincere and real, and however great a person's endeavors are; yea, though they should be to the utmost of his ability; unless the Will which they proceed from be truly good and virtuous, they can be of no avail, influence or weight to any purpose whatsoever, in a moral sense or respect. That which is not truly virtuous, in God's sight, is looked upon, by him, as good for nothing; and so can be of no value, weight or influence in his account, to recommend, satisfy, excuse or make up for any moral defect. For nothing can counterbalance evil, but good. If evil be in one scale, and we put a great deal into the other, sincere and earnest desires, and many and great endeavors; yet, if there be no real goodness in all, there is no weight in it; and so it does nothing towards balancing the real weight, which is in the opposite scale. It is only like the subtracting a thousand noughts from before a real number, which leaves the sum just as it was.

Indeed such endeavors may have a *negatively* good influence. Those things, which have no positive virtue have no positive moral influence; yet they may be an occasion of persons avoiding some positive evils. As if a man were in the water with a neighbor, that he had ill will to, who could not swim, holding him by his hand; which neighbor was much in debt to him; and should be tempted to let him sink and drown; but should refuse to comply with the temptation; not from love to his neighbor, but from the love of money, and because by his drowning he should lose his debt; that which he does in preserving his neighbor from drowning, is nothing good in the sight of God; yet hereby he avoids the greater guilt that would have been contracted, if he had designedly let his neighbor sink and perish. But when *Arminians*, in their disputes with *Calvinists*, insist so much on sincere desires and endeavors, as what must excuse men, must

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be accepted of God, &c. it is manifest they have respect to some positive moral weight or influence of those desires and endeavors. Accepting, justifying or excusing on the account of sincere honest endeavors (as they are called) and men's doing what they can, &c. has relation to some moral value, something that is accepted as good, and as such, countervailing some defect.

But there is a great and unknown deceit arising from the ambiguity of the phrase, *sincere endeavors*. Indeed there is a vast indistinctness and unfixedness in most, or at least very many of the terms used to express things pertaining to moral and spiritual matters. Whence arise innumerable mistakes, strong prejudices, inextricable confusion, and endless controversy.

The word *sincere*, is most commonly used to signify something that is good: Men are habituated to understand by it the same as *honest* and *upright*; which terms excite an idea of something good in the strictest and highest sense; good in the sight of him, who sees not only the outward appearance, but the heart. And, therefore, men think that if a person be *sincere*, he will certainly be accepted. If it be said that any one is sincere in his endeavors, this suggests to men's minds as much, as that his heart and Will is good, that there is no defect of duty, as to virtuous inclination; he *honestly* and *uprightly* desires and endeavors to do as he is required; and this leads them to suppose, that it would be very hard and unreasonable to punish him, only because he is unsuccessful in his endeavors, the thing endeavored being beyond his power.... Whereas it ought to be observed, that the word *sincere* has these different significations:

1. *Sincerity*, as the word is sometimes used, signifies no more than *reality of Will and endeavor*, with respect to any thing that is professed or pretended; without any consideration of the nature of the principle or aim, whence this real Will and true endeavor arises. If a man has some real desire to obtain a thing, either direct or indirect, or does really Endeavor after a thing, he is said sincerely to desire or endeavor it; without any consideration of the goodness or virtuousness

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of the principle he acts from, or any excellency or worthiness of the end he acts for: Thus a man who is kind to his neighbor's wife, who is sick and languishing, and very helpful in her case, makes a shew of desiring and endeavoring her restoration to health and vigor; and not only makes such a shew, but there is a reality in his pretence, he does heartily and earnestly desire to have her health restored, and uses his true and utmost endeavors for it; he is said sincerely to desire and endeavor it; because he does so truly or really; though perhaps the principle he acts from, is no other than a vile and scandalous passion; having lived in adultery with her, he earnestly desires to have her health and vigor restored, that he may return to his criminal pleasures with her. Or,

2. By *sincerity* is meant, not merely a *reality* of Will and endeavor of some sort or other, and from some consideration or other, but a *virtuous sincerity*. That is, that in the performance of those particular acts, that are the matter of virtue or duty, there be not only the matter, but the form and essence of virtue, consisting in the aim that governs the act, and the principle exercised in it. There is not only the reality of the act, that is as it were the *body* of the duty; but also the soul, which should properly belong to such a body. In this sense, a man is said to be sincere, when he acts with a *pure intention*; not from sinister views, or bye ends: He not only in reality desires and seeks the thing to be done, or qualification to be obtained, for some end or other; but he wills the thing directly and properly, as neither forced nor bribed; the virtue of the thing is properly the object of the Will.

In the former sense, a man is said to be sincere, in opposition to a mere pretence, and *shew of the particular thing to be done or exhibited*, without any real desire or endeavor at all. In the latter sense, a man is said to be sincere, in opposition to that *shew of virtue there is in merely doing the matter of duty*, without the reality of the virtue itself in the soul, and the essence of it, which there is a shew of. A man may be sincere in the former sense, and yet in the latter be in the sight of God, who searches the heart, a vile hypocrite.

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In the latter kind of sincerity only, is there any thing truly valuable or acceptable in the sight of God. And this is the thing, which in scripture is called *sincerity, uprightness, integrity, truth in the inward parts,* and a *being of a perfect heart.* And if there be such a sincerity, and such a degree of it as there ought to be, and there be any thing further that the man is not able to perform, or which does not prove to be connected with his sincere desires and endeavors, the man is wholly excused and acquitted in the sight of God; his Will shall surely be accepted for his deed; and such a sincere Will and endeavor is all that in strictness is required of him, by any command of God. But as to the other kind of sincerity of desires and endeavors, it having no virtue in it, (as was observed before) can be of no avail before God, in any case, to recommend, satisfy, or excuse, and has no positive moral weight or influence whatsoever.

Corol. 1. Hence it may be inferred, that nothing in the reason and nature of things appears, from the consideration of any moral weight of that former kind of sincerity, which has been spoken of, at all obliging us to believe, or leading us to suppose, that God has made any positive promises of salvation, or grace, or any saving assistance, or any spiritual benefit whatsoever, to any *desires, prayers, endeavors, striving,* or *obedience* of those, who hitherto have no true virtue or holiness in their hearts; though we should suppose all the sincerity, and the utmost degree of endeavor, that is possible to be in a person without holiness.

Some object against God's requiring, as the condition of salvation, those holy exercises, which are the result of a supernatural renovation: Such as a supreme respect to Christ, love to God, loving holiness for its own sake, &c. that these inward dispositions and exercises are above men's power, as they are by nature; and therefore that we may conclude, that when men are brought to be sincere in their endeavors, and do as well as they can, they are accepted; and that this must be all that God requires, in order to men's being received as the objects of his favor, and must be what God has appointed as the condition of salvation. Concerning which, I would ob-

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serve, that in such a manner of speaking of men's being accepted, because they are sincere, and do as well as they can, there is evidently a supposition of some virtue, some degree of that which is truly good; though it does not go so far as were to be wished. For if men do what they can, unless their so doing be from some good principle, disposition, or exercise of heart, some virtuous inclination or act of the Will; their so doing what they can, is in some respects not a whit better than if they did nothing. In such a case, there is no more positive moral goodness in a man's doing what he can, than in a windmill's doing what it can; because the action does no more proceed from virtue; and there is nothing in such sincerity of endeavor, or doing what we can, that should render it any more a proper or fit recommendation to positive favor and acceptance, or the condition of any reward or actual benefit, than doing nothing; for both the one and the other are alike nothing, as to any true moral weight or value.

Corol. 2. Hence also it follows, that there is nothing that appears in the reason and nature of things, which can justly lead us to determine, that God will certainly give the necessary means of salvation, or some way or other bestow true holiness and eternal life on those *Heathen*, who are sincere (in the sense above explained) in their endeavors to find out the Will of the Deity, and to please him, according to their light, that they may escape his future displeasure and wrath, and obtain happiness in the future state, through his favor.

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SECTION VI.

Liberty of Indifference, *not only not necessary to* Virtue, *but utterly inconsistent with it; and all, either virtuous or vicious* Habits or Inclinations, *inconsistent with* Arminian *Notions of Liberty and moral Agency.*

TO suppose such a freedom of Will, as *Arminians* talk of, to be requisite to virtue and vice, is many ways contrary to common sense.

If indifference belongs to liberty of Will, as *Arminians* suppose, and it be essential to a virtuous action, that it be performed in a state of liberty, as they also suppose; it will follow, that it is essential to a virtuous action, that it be performed in a state of indifference; and if it be performed in a state of indifference, then doubtless it must be performed in the time of indifference. And so it will follow, that in order to the virtuousness of an act, the heart must be indifferent in the time of the performance of that act and the more indifferent and cold the heart is with relation to the act which is performed, so much the better; because the act is performed with so much the greater liberty. But is this agreeable to the light of nature? Is it agreeable to the notions, which mankind, in all ages, have of virtue, that it lies in that, which is contrary to indifference, even in the tendency and inclination of the heart to virtuous action; and that the stronger the inclination, and so the further from indifference, the more virtuous the heart, and so much more praiseworthy the act which proceeds from it?

If we should suppose (contrary to what has been before demonstrated) that there may be an act of Will in a state of indifference; for instance, this act, viz. The Will's determining to put itself out of a state of indifference, and give itself a preponderation one way, then it would follow, on *Arminian*

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principles, that this act or determination of the Will is that alone wherein virtue consists, because this only is performed, while the mind remains in a state of indifference, and so in a state of liberty: For when once the mind is put out of its equilibrium, it is no longer in such a state; and therefore all the acts, which follow afterwards, proceeding from bias, can have the nature neither of virtue nor vice. Or if the thing, which the Will can do, while yet in a state of indifference, and so of liberty, be only to suspend acting, and determine to take the matter into consideration, then this determination is that alone wherein virtue consists, and not proceeding to action after the scale is turned by consideration. So that it will follow, from these principles, that all that is done after the mind, by any means, is once out of its equilibrium and already possessed by an inclination, and arising from that inclination, has nothing of the nature of virtue or vice, and is worthy of neither blame nor praise. But how plainly contrary is this to the universal sense of mankind, and to the notion they have of sincerely virtuous actions? Which is, that they are actions, which proceed from a heart *well disposed* and *inclined*; and the *stronger*, and the more *fixed* and *determined* the good disposition of the heart, the greater the sincerity of virtue, and so the more of the truth and reality of it. But if there be any acts, which are done in a state of equilibrium, or spring immediately from perfect indifference and coldness of heart, they cannot arise from any good principle or disposition in the heart; and, consequently, according to common sense, have no sincere goodness in them, having no virtue of heart in them. To have a virtuous heart, is to have a heart that favors virtue, and is friendly to it, and not one perfectly cold and indifferent about it.

And besides, the actions that are done in a state of indifference, or that arise immediately out of such a state, cannot be virtuous, because, by the supposition, they are not determined by any preceding choice. For if there be preceding choice, then choice intervenes between the act and the state of indifference; which is contrary to the supposition of the act's arising immediately out of indifference. But those acts,

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which are not determined by preceding choice, cannot be virtuous or vicious by *Arminian* principles, because they are not determined by the Will. So that neither one way, nor the other, can any actions be virtuous or vicious, according to *Arminian* principles. If the action *be determined* by a preceding act of choice, it cannot be virtuous; because the action is not done in a state of indifference, nor does immediately arise from such a state; and so is not done in a state of liberty. If the action be *not determined* by a preceding act of choice, then it cannot be virtuous; because then the Will is not selfdetermined in it. So that it is made certain, that neither virtue nor vice can ever find any place in the universe.

Moreover, that it is necessary to a virtuous action, that it be performed in a state of indifference, under a notion of that being a state of liberty, is contrary to common sense; as it is a dictate of common sense, that indifference itself, in many cases, is vicious, and so to a high degree. As if when I see my neighbor or near friend, and one who has in the highest degree merited of me, in extreme distress, and ready to perish, I find an indifference in my heart with respect to any thing proposed to be done, which I can easily do, for his relief. So if it should be proposed to me to blaspheme God, or kill my father, or do numberless other things, which might be mentioned, the being indifferent, for a moment, would be highly vicious and vile.

And it may be further observed, that to suppose this liberty of indifference is essential to virtue and vice, destroys the great difference of degrees of the guilt of different crimes, and takes away the heinousness of the most flagitious, horrid iniquities; such as adultery, bestiality, murder, perjury, blasphemy, &c. For, according to these principles, there is no harm at all in having the mind in a state of perfect indifference with respect to these crimes: Nay, it is absolutely necessary in order to any virtue in avoiding them, or vice in doing them. But for the mind to be in a state of indifference with respect to them, is to be next door to doing them: It is then infinitely near to choosing, and so committing the fact; For equilibrium is the next step to a degree of prepondera-

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tion; and one, even the least degree of preponderation, (all things considered) is choice. And not only so, but for the Will to be in a state of perfect equilibrium with respect to such crimes, is for the mind to be in such a state, as to be full as likely to choose them as to refuse them, to do them as to omit them. And if our minds must be in such a state, wherein it is as near to choosing as refusing, and wherein it must of necessity, according to the nature of things, be as likely to commit them, as to refrain from them; where is the exceeding heinousness of choosing and committing them? If there be no harm in often being in such a state, wherein the probability of doing and forbearing are exactly equal, there being an equilibrium, and no more tendency to one than the other; then, according to the nature and laws of such a contingence, it may be expected, as an *inevitable* consequence of such a disposition of things, that we should choose them as often as reject them: That it should generally so fall out is necessary, as equality in the effect is the natural consequence of the equal tendency of the cause, or of the antecedent state of things from which the effect arises. Why then should we be so exceedingly to blame, if it does so fall out?

It is many ways apparent, that the *Arminian* scheme of liberty is utterly inconsistent with the being of any such things as either virtuous or vicious habits or dispositions. If liberty of *indifference* be essential to moral agency, then there can be no virtue in any habitual inclinations of the heart; which are contrary to indifference, and imply in their nature the very destruction and exclusion of it. They suppose nothing can be virtuous, in which no liberty is exercised; but how absurd is it to talk of exercising indifference under bias and preponderation!

And if *self-determining power* in the Will be necessary to moral agency, praise, blame, &c. then nothing done by the Will can be any further praise or blameworthy, than so far as the Will is moved, swayed and determined by itself, and the scales turned by the sovereign power the Will has over itself. And therefore the Will must not be put out of its balance already, the preponderation must not be determined and effect-

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ed beforehand; and so the selfdetermining act anticipated. Thus it appears another way, that habitual bias is inconsistent with that liberty, which *Arminians* suppose to be necessary to virtue or vice; and so it follows, that habitual bias itself cannot be either virtuous or vicious.

The same thing follows from their doctrine concerning the inconsistence of *necessity* with liberty, praise, dispraise, &c. None will deny, that bias and inclination may be so strong as to be invincible, and leave no possibility of the Will's determining contrary to it; and so be attended with necessity. This Dr. Whitby allows concerning the Will of God, Angels, and glorified Saints, with respect to good; and the Will of Devils with respect to evil. Therefore if necessity be inconsistent with liberty; then, when fixed inclination is to such a degree of strength, it utterly excludes all virtue, vice, praise or blame. And if so, then the nearer habits are to this strength, the more do they impede liberty, and so diminish praise and blame. If very strong habits destroy liberty, the less ones proportionably hinder it, according to their degree of strength. And therefore it will follow, that then is the act most virtuous or vicious, when performed without any inclination or habitual bias at all; because it is then performed with most liberty.

Every prepossessing, fixed bias on the mind, brings a degree of moral inability for the contrary; because so far as the mind is biassed and prepossessed, so much hinderance is there of the contrary. And therefore if moral inability be inconsistent with moral agency, or the nature of virtue and vice, then, so far as there is any such thing as evil disposition of heart, or habitual depravity of inclination; whether covetousness, pride, malice, cruelty, or whatever else; so much the more excusable persons are; so much the less have their evil acts of this kind the nature of vice. And on the contrary, whatever excellent dispositions and inclinations they have, so much are they the less virtuous.

It is evident, that no habitual disposition of heart, whether it be to a greater or less degree, can be in any degree virtuous or vicious; or the actions which proceed from them *at*

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ill praise or blameworthy.....Because, though we should suppose the habit not to be of such strength, as wholly to take away all moral ability and selfdetermining power; or hinder but that, although the act be partly from bias, yet it may be in part from selfdetermination; yet in this case, all that is from antecedent bias must be set aside, as of no consideration; and in estimating the degree of virtue or vice, no more must be considered than what arises from selfdetermining power, without any influence of that bias, because liberty is exercised in no more; so that all that is the exercise of habitual inclination, is thrown away, as not belonging to the morality of the action. By which it appears, that no exercise of these habits, let them be stronger or weaker, can ever have any thing of the nature of either virtue or vice.

Here if any one should say, that notwithstanding all these things, there may be the nature of virtue and vice in habits of the mind; because these habits may be the effects of those acts, wherein the mind exercised liberty; that however the forementioned reasons will prove that no habits, which are natural, or that are born or created with us can be either virtuous or vicious; yet they will not prove this of habits, which have been acquired and established by repeated free acts.

To such an objector I would say, that this evasion will not at all help the matter. For if freedom of Will be essential to the very *nature* of virtue and vice, then there is no virtue or vice, but only in that very thing, wherein this liberty is exercised. If a man in one or more things, that he does, exercises liberty, and then by those acts is brought into such circumstances, that his Liberty ceases, and there follows a long series of acts or events that come to pass necessarily; those consequent acts are not virtuous or vicious, rewardable or punishable; but only the free acts that established this necessity; for in them alone was the man free. The following effects, that are necessary, have no more of the nature of virtue or vice, than health or sickness of body have properly the nature of virtue or vice, being the effects of a course of free acts of temperance or intemperance; or than the good quali-

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ties of a clock are of the nature of virtue, which are the effects of free acts of the artificer; or the goodness and sweetness of the fruits of a garden are moral virtues, being the effects of the free and faithful acts of the gardener. If liberty be absolutely requisite to the morality of actions and necessity wholly inconsitent with it, as *Arminians* greatly insist; then no necessary effects whatsoever, let the cause be ever so good or bad, can be virtuous or vicious; but the virtue or vice must be only in the *free cause*. Agreeably to this, Dr. Whitby supposes, the necessity that attends the good and evil habits of the saints in heaven, and damned in hell, which are the consequence of their free acts in their state of probation, are not rewardable or punishable.

On the whole, it appears, that if the notions of *Arminians* concerning liberty and moral agency be true, it will follow, that there is no virtue in any such habits or qualities as humility, meekness, patience, mercy, gratitude, generosity, heavenly mindedness; nothing at all praiseworthy in loving Christ above father and mother, wife and children, or our own lives; or in delight in holiness, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, love to enemies, universal benevolence to mankind: And on the other hand, there is nothing at all vicious, or worthy of dispraise, in the most sordid, beastly, malignant, devilish dispositions; in being ungrateful, profane, habitually hating God, and things sacred and holy; or in being most treacherous, envious, and cruel towards men. For all these things are *dispositions* and *inclinations* of the heart. And in short, there is no such thing as any virtuous or vicious *quality of mind*; no such thing as inherent virtue and holiness, or vice and sin: And the stronger those habits or dispositions are, which used to be called virtuous and vicious, the further they are from being so indeed; the more violent men's lusts are, the more fixed their pride, envy, ingratitude and maliciousness, still the further are they from being blameworthy. If there be a man that by his own repeated acts, or by any other means, is come to be of the most hellish disposition, desperately inclined to treat his neighbors with injuriousness, contempt and malignity; the further they should be

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from any disposition to be angry with him, or in the least to blame him. So, on the other hand, if there be a person, who is of a most excellent spirit, strongly inclining him to the most amiable actions, admirably meek, benevolent, &c. so much is he further from any thing rewardable or commendable. On which principles, the man Jesus Christ was very far from being praiseworthy for those acts of holiness and kindness, which he performed, these propensities being strong in his heart. And above all, the infinitely holy and gracious God is infinitely remote from any thing commendable, his good inclinations being infinitely strong, and He, therefore, at the utmost possible distance from being at liberty. And in all cases, the stronger the inclinations of any are to virtue, and the more they love it, the less virtuous they are; and the more they love wickedness, the less vicious.... Whether these things are agreeable to scripture, let every Christian, and every man who has read the Bible, judge: And whether they are agreeable to common sense, let every one judge, that has human understanding in exercise.

And, if we pursue these principles, we shall find that virtue and vice are wholly excluded out of the world; and that there never was, nor ever can be any such thing as one or the other; either in God, angels, or men. No propensity, disposition or habit can be virtuous or vicious, as has been shewn; because they, so far as they take place, destroy the freedom of the Will, the foundation of all moral agency, and exclude all capacity of either virtue or vice....And if habits and dispositions themselves be not virtuous nor vicious, neither can the exercise of these dispositions be so; for the exercise of *bias* is not the exercise of *free selfdetermining Will*, and so there is no exercise of liberty in it. Consequently, no man is virtuous or vicious, either in being well or ill disposed, nor in acting from a good or bad disposition. And whether this bias or disposition, be habitual or not, if it exists but a moment before the act of Will, which is the effect of it, it alters not the case, as to the necessity of the effect. Or if there be no previous disposition at all, either habitual or occasional, that determines the act, then it is not choice that determines

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it: It is therefore a contingence, that happens to the man, arising from nothing in him; and is necessary, as to any inclination or choice of his; and, therefore, cannot make him either the better or worse, any more than a tree is better than other trees, because it oftener happens to be lit upon by a swan or nightingale; or a rock more vicious than other rocks, because rattlesnakes have happened oftener to crawl over it. So that there is no virtue nor vice in good or bad dispositions, either fixed or transient; nor any virtue or vice in acting from any good or bad previous inclination; nor yet any virtue or vice, in acting wholly without any previous inclination. Where then shall we find room for virtue or vice?

SECTION VII.

Arminian *Notions of moral Agency inconsistent with all influence of* Motive *and* Inducement, *in either virtuous or vicious Actions.*

AS *Arminian* notions of that liberty, which is essential to virtue or vice, are inconsistent with common sense, in their being inconsistent with all virtuous and vicious habits and dispositions; so they are no less so in their inconsistency with all influence of motives in moral actions.

It is equally against those notions of liberty of Will, whether there be, previous to the act of choice, a preponderancy of the inclination, or a preponderancy of those circumstances, which have a tendency to move the inclination. And, indeed, it comes to just the same thing; to say, the circumstances of the mind are such as tend to sway and turn its inclination one way, is the same thing as to say, the inclination of the mind, as under such circumstances, tends that way.

Or if any think it most proper to say, that motives do alter the inclination, and give a new bias to the mind, it will not

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alter the case, as to the present argument. For if motives operate by giving the mind an inclination, then they operate by destroying the mind's indifference, and laying it under a bias. But to do this, is to destroy the *Arminian* freedom: It is not to leave the Will to its own selfdetermination, but to bring it into subjection to the power of something extrinsic, which operates upon it, sways and determines it, previous to its own determination. So that what is done from motive, cannot be either virtuous or vicious. And besides, if the acts of the Will are excited by motives, those motives are the causes of those acts of the Will; which makes the acts of the Will necessary; as effects necessarily follow the efficiency of the cause. And if the influence and power of the motive causes the volition, then the influence of the motive determines volition, and volition does not determine itself; and so is not free, in the sense of *Arminians*, (as has been largely shewn already) and consequently can be neither virtuous nor vicious.

The supposition, which has already been taken notice of as an insufficient evasion in other cases, would be, in like manner, impertinently alleged in this case; namely, the supposition that liberty consists in a power of suspending action for the present, in order to deliberation. If it should be said, though it be true, that the Will is under a necessity of finally following the strongest motive; yet it may, for the present, forbear to act upon the motive presented, till there has been opportunity thoroughly to consider it, and compare its real weight with the merit of other motives. I answer as follows:

Here again, it must be remembered, that if determining thus to suspend and consider, be that act of the Will, wherein alone liberty is exercised, then in this all virtue and vice must consist; and the acts that follow this consideration, and are the effects of it, being necessary, are no more virtuous or vicious than some good or bad events, which happen when men are fast asleep, and are the consequences of what they did when they were awake. Therefore, I would here observe two things;

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1. To suppose, that all virtue and vice, in every case, consists in determining, whether to take time for consideration or not, is not agreeable to common sense. For, according to such a supposition, the most horrid crimes, adultery, murder, sodomy, blasphemy, &c. do not at all consist in the horrid nature of the things themselves, but only in the neglect of thorough consideration before they were perpetrated, which brings their viciousness to a small matter, and makes all crimes equal. If it be said, that neglect of consideration, when such heinous evils are proposed to choice, is worse than in other cases: I answer, this is inconsistent, as it supposes the very thing to be, which, at the same time, is supposed not to be; it supposes all moral evil, all viciousness and heinousness, does not consist merely in the want of consideration. It supposes some crimes *in themselves*, in their *own nature*, to be more heinous than others, antecedent to consideration or inconsideration, which lays the person under a previous obligation to consider in some cases more than others.

2. If it were so, that all virtue and vice, in every case, consisted only in the act of the Will, whereby it determines whether to consider or no, it would not alter the case in the least, as to the present argument. For still in this act of the Will on this determination, it is induced by some motive, and necessarily follows the strongest motive; and so is necessary, even in that act wherein alone it is either virtuous or vicious.

One thing more I would observe, concerning the inconsistence of *Arminian* notions of moral agency with the influence of motives.....I suppose none will deny, that it is possible for motives to be set before the mind so powerful, and exhibited in so strong a light, and under so advantageous circumstances, as to be invincible; and such as the mind cannot but yield to. In this case, *Arminians* will doubtless say, liberty is destroyed. And if so, then if motives are exhibited with half so much power, they hinder liberty in proportion to their strength, and go halfway towards destroying it. If a thousand degrees of motive abolish all liberty, then five hundred take it half away. If one degree of the influence of mo-

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tive does not at all infringe or diminish liberty, then no more do two degrees; for nothing doubled, is still nothing. And if two degrees do not diminish the Will's liberty, no more do four, eight, sixteen, or six thousand. For nothing multiplied ever so much, comes to but nothing. If there be nothing in the nature of motive or moral suasion, that is at all opposite to liberty, then the greatest degree of it cannot hurt liberty. But if there be any thing in the nature of the thing, that is against liberty, then the least degree of it hurts it in some degree; and consequently hurts and diminishes virtue. If invincible motives, to that action which is good, take away all the freedom of the act, and so all the virtue of it; then the more forcible the motives are, so much the worse, so much the less virtue; and the weaker the motives are, the better for the cause of virtue; and none is best of all.

Now let it be considered, whether these things are agreeable to common sense. If it should be allowed, that there are some instances wherein the soul chooses without any motive, what virtue can there be in such a choice? I am sure, there is no prudence or wisdom in it. Such a choice is made for no good end; for it is for no end at all. If it were for any end, the view of the end would be the motive exciting to the act; and if the act be for no good end, and so from no good aim, then there is no good intention in it; and, therefore, according to all our natural notions of virtue, no more virtue in it than in the motion of the smoke, which is driven to and fro by the wind without any aim or end in the thing moved, and which knows not whither, nor why and wherefore, it is moved.

Corol. 1. By these things it appears, that the argument against the *Calvinists*, taken from the use of counsels, exhortations, invitations, expostulations, &c. so much insisted on by *Arminians*, is truly against themselves. For these things can operate no other way to any good effect, than as in them is exhibited motive and inducement, tending to excite and determine the acts of the Will. But it follows, on their principles, that the acts of Will excited by such causes, cannot be virtuous; because so far as they are from these, they are not from

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the Will's selfdetermining power. Hence it will follow, that it is not worth the while to offer any arguments to persuade men to any virtuous volition or voluntary action; it is in vain to set before them the wisdom and amiableness of ways of virtue, or the odiousness and folly of ways of vice. This notion of liberty and moral agency frustrates all endeavors to draw men to virtue by instruction or persuasion, precept or example: For though these things may induce men to what is *materially* virtuous, yet at the same time they take away the *form* of virtue, because they destroy liberty; as they, by their own power, put the Will out of its equilibrium, determine and turn the scale, and take the work of selfdetermining power out of its hands. And the clearer the instructions are that are given, the more powerful the arguments that are used, and the more moving the persuasions or examples, the more likely they are to frustrate their own design; because they have so much the greater tendency to put the Will out of its balance, to hinder its freedom of selfdetermination; and so to exclude the very form of virtue, and the essence of whatsoever is praiseworthy.

So it clearly follows, from these principles, that God has no hand in any man's virtue, nor does at all promote it, either by a physical or moral influence; that none of the moral methods He uses with men to promote virtue in the world, have tendency to the attainment of that end; that all the instructions, which he has given to men, from the beginning of the world to this day, by prophets, apostles, or by his Son Jesus Christ; that all his counsels, invitations, promises, threatenings, warnings and expostulations; that all means he has used with men, in ordinances, or providences; yea, all influences of his Spirit, ordinary and extraordinary, have had no tendency to excite any one virtuous act of the mind, or to promote any thing morally good or commendable, in any respect. For there is no way that these or any other means can promote virtue, but one of these three. Either (1.) By a physical operation on the heart. But all effects that are wrought in men this way, have no virtue in them, by the concurring voice of all *Arminians*. Or, (2.) morally, by exhibiting mo-

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tives to the understanding, to excite good acts in the Will. But it has been demonstrated, that volitions, which are excited by motives, are necessary, and not excited by a selfmoving power; and therefore, by their principles, there is no virtue in them. Or, (3.) By merely giving the Will an opportunity to determine itself concerning the objects proposed, either to choose or reject, by its own uncaused, unmoved, uninfluenced selfdetermination. And if this be all, then all those means do no more to promote virtue than vice: For they do nothing but give the Will opportunity to determine itself *either way*, either to good or bad, without laying it under any bias to either: And so there is really as much of an opportunity given to determine in favor of evil, as of good.

Thus that horrid blasphemous consequence will certainly follow from the *Arminian* doctrine, which they charge on others; namely, that God acts an inconsistent part in using so many counsels, warnings, invitations, intreaties, &c. with sinners, to induce them to forsake sin, and turn to the ways of virtue; and that all are insincere and fallacious. It will follow, from their doctrine, that God does these things when he knows, at the same time that they have no manner of tendency to promote the effect he seems to aim at; yea, knows that if they have any influence, this very influence will be inconsistent with such an effect, and will prevent it. But what an imputation of insincerity would this fix on Him, who is infinitely holy and true!....So that their's is the doctrine, which, if pursued in its consequences, does horribly reflect on the Most High, and fix on Him the charge of hypocrisy; and not the doctrine of the *Calvinists*; according to their frequent, and vehement exclamations and invectives.

Corol. 2. From what has been observed in this section, it again appears, that *Arminian* principles and notions, when fairly examined and pursued in their demonstrable consequences, do evidently shut all virtue out of the world, and make it impossible that there should ever be any such thing, in any case; or that any such thing should ever be conceived of. For, by these principles, the very notion of virtue or vice implies absurdity and contradiction.....For it is absurd in itself, and con-

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trary to common sense, to suppose a virtuous act of mind without any good intention or aim; and, by their principles, it is absurd to suppose a virtuous act with a good intention or aim; for to act for an end, is to act from a motive. So that if we rely on these principles, there can be no virtuous act with a good design and end; and it is selfevident, there can be none without: Consequently there can be no virtuous act at all.

Corol. 3. It is manifest, that *Arminian* notions of moral agency, and *the being* of a faculty of Will, cannot consist together; and that if there be any such thing as either a virtuous or vicious act it cannot be an act of the Will; no Will can be at all concerned in it. For that act which is performed without inclination, without motive, without end, must be performed without any concern of the Will. To suppose an act of the Will without these, implies a contradiction. If the soul in its act has no motive or end; then, in that act (as was observed before) it seeks nothing, goes after nothing, exerts no inclination to any thing; and this implies, that in that act it desires nothing, and chooses nothing; so that there is no act of choice in the case: And that is as much as to say, there is no act of Will in the case. Which very effectually shuts all vicious and virtuous acts out of the universe; in as much as, according to this, there can be no vicious or virtuous act wherein the Will is concerned; and according to the plainest dictates of reason, and the light of nature, and also the principles of *Arminians* themselves, there can be no virtuous or vicious act wherein the Will is not concerned. And therefore there is no room for any virtuous or vicious acts at all.

Corol. 4. If none of the moral actions of intelligent beings are influenced by either previous inclination or motive, another strange thing will follow; and this is, that God not only cannot foreknow any of the future moral actions of his creatures, but he can make no conjecture, can give no probable guess concerning them. For all conjecture in things of this nature, must depend on some discerning or apprehension of these two things, *previous disposition* and *motive*, which, as has been observed, *Arminian* notions of moral agency, in their real consequence, altogether exclude.

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PART IV.

Wherein the chief grounds of the reasonings of Arminians, *in support and defence of the forementioned notions of* Liberty, moral Agency, *&c. and against the opposite doctrine, are considered.*

SECTION I.

The Essence *of the Virtue and Vice of Dispositions of the Heart, and Acts of the Will, lies not in their* Cause, *but their* Nature.

ONE main foundation of the reasons which are brought to establish the forementioned notions of liberty, virtue, vice, &c. is a supposition, that the virtuousness of the dispositions, or acts of the Will, consists, not in the nature of these dispositions or acts, but wholly in the origin or cause of them: So that if the disposition of the mind, or act of the Will, be ever so good, yet if the cause of the disposition or act be not our virtue, there is nothing virtuous or praiseworthy in it; and, on the contrary, if the Will, in its inclination or acts, be ever so bad, yet, unless it arises from something that is our vice or fault, there is nothing vicious or blameworthy in it. Hence their grand objection and pretended demonstration, or self-evidence, against any virtue and commendableness, or vice and blameworthiness, of those habits or acts of the Will, which are not from some virtuous or vicious determination of the Will itself.

Now if this matter be well considered, it will appear to be altogether a mistake, yea, a gross absurdity; and that it is most

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certain, that if there be any such things as a virtuous or vicious disposition, or volition of mind, the virtuousness or viciousness of them consists, not in the origin or cause of these things, but in the nature of them.

If the essence of virtuousness or commendableness, and of viciousness or fault, does not lie in the nature of the dispositions or acts of mind, which are said to be our virtue or our fault, but in their cause, then it is certain it lies no where at all. Thus for instance, if the vice of a vicious act of Will lies not in the nature of the act, but the cause; so that its being of a bad nature will not make it at all our fault, unless it arises from some faulty determination of our's, as its cause, or something in us that is our fault: Then, for the same reason neither can the viciousness of that cause lie in the nature of the thing itself, but in its cause: That evil determination of our's is not our fault, merely because it is of a bad nature, unless it arises from some cause in us that is our fault. And when we are come to this higher cause, still the reason of the thing holds good; though this cause be of a bad nature, yet we are not at all to blame on that account, unless it arises from something faulty in us. Nor yet can blameworthiness lie in the nature of *this cause*, but in the cause of *that*. And thus we must drive faultiness back from step to step, from a lower cause to a higher, *in infinitum*: And that is thoroughly to banish it from the world, and to allow it no possibility of existence any where in the universality of things. On these principles, vice, or moral evil, cannot consist in any thing that is an *effect*; because *fault* does not consist in the nature of things, but in their cause; as well as because effects are necessary, being unavoidably connected with their cause: Therefore the cause only is to blame. And so it follows, that faultiness can lie *only in that cause*, which is a *cause only*, and no effect of any thing. Nor yet can it lie in this; for then it must lie in the nature of the thing itself; not in its being from any determination of our's, nor any thing faulty in us which is the cause, nor indeed from any cause at all; for, by the supposition, it is no effect, and *has no cause*. And thus, he that will maintain, it is not the nature of habits or acts of

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Will that make them virtuous or faulty, but the cause, must immediately run himself out of his own assertion; and in maintaining it, will insensibly contradict and deny it.

This is certain, that if effects are vicious and faulty, not from their nature, or from any thing inherent in them, but because they are from a bad cause, it must be on account of the badness of the cause and so on account of the nature of the cause: A bad effect in the Will must be bad, because the cause is *bad*, or *of an evil nature* or *has badness* as a quality inherent in it: And a *good* effect in the Will must be *good*, by reason of the *goodness* of the cause, or its being *of a good kind and nature*. And if this be what is meant, the very supposition of fault and praise lying not in the nature of the thing, but the cause, contradicts itself, and does at least resolve the essence of virtue and vice into the nature of things, and supposses it originally to consist in that.....And if a caviller has a mind to run from the absurdity, by saying, "No, the fault of the thing, which is the cause, lies not in this, that the cause itself is *of an evil nature*, but that the cause is evil in that sense, that it is from another bad cause:" Still the absurdity will follow him; for, if so, then the cause before charged is at once acquitted, and all the blame must be laid to the higher cause, and must consist in that's being *evil* or *of an evil nature*. So now, we are come again to lay the blame of the thing blameworthy, to the nature of the thing, and not to the cause. And if any is so foolish as to go higher still, and ascend from step to step, till he is come to that, which is the first cause concerned in the whole affair, and will say, all the blame lies in that; then, at last, he must be forced to own, that the faultiness of the thing, which he supposes alone blameworthy, lies wholly in the nature of the thing, and not in the original or cause of it; for the supposition is that it has no original, it is determined by no act of our's, is caused by nothing faulty in us, being absolutely *without any cause*. And so the race is at an end, but the evader is taken in his flight.

It is agreeable to the natural notions of mankind, that moral evil, with its desert of dislike and abhorrence, and all its other ill deservings, consists in a certain *deformity* in the *na-*

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ture of certain dispositions of the heart, and acts of the Will; and not in the deformity of *something else*, diverse from the very thing itself, which deserves abhorrence, supposed to be the cause of it. Which would be absurd, because that would be to suppose a thing, that is innocent and not evil, is truly evil and faulty, because another thing is evil. It implies a contradiction; for it would be to suppose the very thing, which is morally evil and blameworthy, is innocent and not blameworthy; but that something else, which is its cause, is only to blame. To say, that vice does not consist in the thing which is vicious, but in its cause, is the same as to say, that vice does not consist in vice, but in that which produces it.

It is true, a cause may be to blame, for being the cause of vice: It may be wickedness in the cause, that it produces wickedness. But it would imply a contradiction, to suppose that these two are the same individual wickedness. The wicked act of the cause in producing wickedness, is one wickedness; and the wickedness produced, if there be any produced, is another. And therefore, the wickedness of the latter does not lie in the former, but is distinct from it; and the wickedness of both lies in the *evil nature* of the things, which are wicked.

The thing, which makes sin hateful, is that by which it deserves punishment; which is but the expression of hatred. And that, which renders virtue lovely, is the same with that, on the account of which, it is fit to receive praise and reward; which are but the expressions of esteem and love. But that which makes vice hateful, is its hateful nature; and that which renders virtue lovely, is its amiable nature. It is a certain beauty or deformity that is *inherent* in that good or evil Will, which is the *soul* of virtue and vice (and not in the occasion of it) which is their worthiness of esteem or disesteem, praise or dispraise, according to the common sense of mankind. If the cause or occasion of the rise of an hateful disposition or act of Will, be also hateful; suppose another antecedent evil Will; that is entirely another sin, and deserves punishment by itself, under a distinct consideration. There is worthiness of dispraise in the nature of an evil volition, and not wholly

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in some foregoing act, which is its cause; otherwise the evil volition, which is the effect, is no moral evil, any more than sickness, or some other natural calamity, which arises from a cause morally evil.

Thus, for instance, ingratitude is hateful and worthy of dispraise, according to common sense; not because something as bad, or worse than ingratitude, was the cause that produced it; but because it is hateful in itself, by its own inherent deformity. So the love of virtue is amiable, and worthy of praise, not merely because something else went before this love of virtue in our minds, which caused it to take place there; for instance, our own choice; we chose to love virtue, and, by some method or other, wrought ourselves into the love of it; but because of the amiableness and condecency of such a disposition and inclination of heart. If that was the case, that we did choose to love virtue, and so produced that love in ourselves, this choice itself could be no otherwise amiable or praiseworthy, than as love to virtue, or some other amiable inclination, was exercised and implied in it. If that choice was amiable at all, it must be so on account of some amiable quality in the nature of the choice. If we chose to love virtue, not in love to virtue, or any thing that was good, and exercised no sort of good disposition in the choice, the choice itself was not virtuous, nor worthy of any praise, according to common sense, because the choice was not of a *good nature*.

It may not be improper here to take notice of something said by an author, that has lately made a mighty noise in America. "A necessary holiness (says he*) is no holiness. Adam could not be originally created in righteousness and true holiness, because he must *choose* to be righteous, *before* he could be righteous. And therefore he must exist, he must be created, yea, must exercise thought and reflection, before he was righteous." There is much more to the same effect in that place, and also in p. 437, 438, 439, 440. If these things are so, it will certainly follow, that the first choosing to be

* Scrip. Doc. of *Original Sin*, p. 180. 3d Edit.

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righteous is no righteous choice; there is no righteousness or holiness in it; because no choosing to be righteous goes before it. For he plainly speaks of *choosing to be righteous*, as what *must go before righteousness*: And that which follows the choice, being the effect of the choice, cannot be righteousness or holiness: For an effect is a thing necessary, and cannot prevent the influence or efficacy of its cause; and therefore is unavoidably dependent upon the cause: And he says, *a necessary holiness is no holiness*. So that neither can a choice of righteousness be righteousness or holiness, nor can any thing that is consequent on that choice, and the effect of it, be righteousness or holiness; nor can any thing that is without choice, be righteousness or holiness. So that by his scheme, all righteousness and holiness is at once shut out of the world, and no door left open, by which it can ever possibly enter into the world.

I suppose, the way that men came to entertain this absurd, inconsistent notion, with respect to *internal inclinations and volitions* themselves, (or notions that imply it) viz. that the essence of their moral good or evil lies not in their nature, but their cause; was, that it is indeed a very plain dictate of common sense, that it is so with respect to all outward actions, and sensible motions of the body; that the moral good or evil of them does not lie at all in the motions themselves; which, taken by themselves, are nothing of a moral nature; and the essence of all the moral good or evil that concerns them, lies in those internal dispositions and volitions, which are the cause of them. Now, being always used to determine this, without hesitation or dispute, concerning external actions; which are the things, that in the common use of language are signified by such phrases as men's *actions*, or their *doings*; hence, when they came to speak of volitions, and *internal exercises* of their inclinations, under the same denomination of their *actions*, or *what they do*, they unwarily determined the case must also be the same with these, as with external actions; not considering the vast difference in the nature of the case.

If any shall still object and say, why is it not necessary that the cause should be considered, in order to determine wheth-

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er any thing be worthy of blame or praise? Is it agreeable to reason and common sense, that a man is to be praised or blamed for that, which he is not the cause or author of, and has no hand in?

I answer, such phrases as *being the cause*, *being the author*, *having a hand*, and the like, are ambiguous. They are most vulgarly understood for being the designing, voluntary cause, or cause by antecedent choice; and it is most certain that men are not, in this sense, the causes or authors of the first act of their Will's, in any case; as certain as any thing is, or ever can be; for nothing can be more certain, than that a thing is not before it is, nor a thing of the same kind before the first thing of that kind; and so no choice before the first choice. As the phrase, *being the author*, may be understood, not of being the producer by an antecedent act of Will; but as a person may be said to be the author of the act of Will itself, by his being the immediate agent, or the being that is acting, or in exercise in that act; if the phrase of *being the author*, is used to signify this, then doubtless common sense requires men's being the authors of their own acts of Will, in order to their being esteemed worthy of praise or dispraise, on account of them. And common sense teaches, that they must be the authors of external actions, in the former sense, namely, their being the causes of them by an act of Will or choice, in order to their being justly blamed or praised; but it teaches no such thing with respect to the acts of the Will themselves. But this may appear more manifest by the things which will be observed in the following section.

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SECTION II.

The Falseness and Inconsistence of that metaphysical Notion of Action *and* Agency, *which seems to be generally entertained by the Defenders of the* Arminian *Doctrine concerning Liberty, moral Agency, &c.*

ONE thing that is made very much a ground of argument and supposed demonstration by *Arminians*, in defence of the forementioned principles, concerning moral agency, virtue, vice, &c. is their metaphysical notion of agency and action. They say, unless the soul has a selfdetermining power, it has no power of action; if its volitions be not caused by itself, but are excited and determined by some extrinsic cause, they cannot be the soul's own acts; and that the soul cannot be active, but must be wholly passive, in those effects which it is the subject of necessarily, and not from its own free determination.

Mr. Chubb lays the foundation of his scheme of liberty, and of his arguments to support it, very much in this position, that man is an agent, and capable of action. Which doubtless is true; but selfdetermination belongs to his notion of action, and is the very essence of it. Whence he infers, that it is impossible for a man to act and be acted upon, in the same thing, at the same time; and that nothing, that is an action, can be the effect of the action of another; and he insists, that a necessary agent, or an agent that is necessarily determined to act, is a plain contradiction.

But those are a precarious sort of demonstrations, which men build on the meaning that they arbitrarily affix to a word; especially when that meaning is abstruse, inconsistent, and entirely diverse from the original sense of the word in common speech.

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That the meaning of the word *action*, as Mr. Chubb and many others use it, is utterly unintelligible and inconsistent, is manifest, because it belongs to their notion of an action, that it is something wherein is no passion or passiveness; that is (according to their sense of passiveness) it is under the power, influence or action of no cause. And this implies, that action has no cause, and is no effect; for to be an effect implies passiveness, or the being subject to the power and action of its cause. And yet they hold, that the mind's action is the effect of its own determination, yea, the mind's free and voluntary determination; which is the same with free choice. So that action is the effect of something preceding, even a preceding act of choice; and consequently, in this effect the mind is passive, subject to the power and action of the preceding cause, which is the foregoing choice, and therefore cannot be active. So that here we have this contradiction, that action is always the effect of foregoing choice; and therefore cannot be action; because it is passive to the power of that preceding causal choice; and the mind cannot be active and passive in the same thing, at the same time. Again, they say, necessity is utterly inconsistent with action, and a necessary action is a contradiction; and so their notion of action implies contingence, and excludes all necessity. And therefore, their notion of action implies, that it has no necessary dependence or connexion with any thing foregoing; for such a dependence or connexion excludes contingence, and implies necessity. And yet their notion of action implies necessity, and supposes that it is necessary, and cannot be contingent. For they suppose, that whatever is properly called action, must be determined by the Will and free choice; and this is as much as to say, that it must be necessary, being dependent upon, and determined by something foregoing; namely, a foregoing act of choice. Again, it belongs to their notion of action, of that which is a proper and mere act, that it is the beginning of motion, or of exertion of power; but yet it is implied in their notion of action, that it is not the beginning of motion or exertion of power, but is consequent and dependent on a preceding exertion of power, viz. the power of Will

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and choice; for they say there is no proper action but what is freely chosen; or, which is the same thing, determined by a foregoing act of free choice. But if any of them shall see cause to deny this, and say they hold no such thing as that every action is chosen or determined by a foregoing choice; but that the very first exertion of Will only, undetermined by any preceding act, is properly called action; then I say, such a man's notion of action implies necessity; for what the mind is the subject of, without the determination of its own previous choice, it is the subject of necessarily, as to any hand, that free choice has in the affair, and, without any ability, the mind has to prevent it, by any Will or election of its own; because by the supposition it precludes all previous acts of the Will or choice in the case, which might prevent it. So that it is again, in this other way, implied in their notion of act, that it is both necessary and not necessary. Again, it belongs to their notion of an act, that it is no effect of a predetermining bias or preponderation, but springs immediately out of indifference; and this implies, that it cannot be from foregoing choice, which is foregoing preponderation: If it be not habitual, but occasional, yet if it causes the act, it is truly previous, efficacious and determining. And yet, at the same time, it is essential to their notion of an act, that it is what the agent is the author of freely and voluntarily, and that is, by previous choice and design.

So that, according to their notion of an act, considered with regard to its consequences, these following things are all essential to it, viz. that it should be necessary, and not necessary; that it should be from a cause, and no cause; that it should be the fruit of choice and design, and not the fruit of choice and design; that it should be the beginning of motion or exertion, and yet consequent on previous exertion; that it should be before it is; that it should spring immediately out of indifference and equilibrium, and yet be the effect of preponderation; that it should be selforiginated, and also have its original from something else; that it is what the mind causes itself, of its own Will, and can produce or prevent, according

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to its choice or pleasure, and yet what the mind has no power to prevent, it precluding all previous choice in the affair.

So that an act, according to their metaphysical notion of it, is something of which there is no idea: It is nothing but a confusion of the mind, excited by words without any distinct meaning, and is an absolute nonentity; and that in two respects: (1.) There is nothing in the world that ever was, is, or can be, to answer the things which must belong to its description, according to what they suppose to be essential to it. And (2.) There neither is, nor ever was, nor can be, any notion or idea to answer the word, as they use and explain it. For if we should suppose any such notion, it would many ways destroy itself. But it is impossible any idea or notion should subsist in the mind, whose very nature and essence, which constitutes it, destroys it. If some learned philosopher, who had been abroad, in giving an account of the curious observations he had made in his travels, should say, "He had been in *Terra del Fuego*, and there had seen an animal, which he calls by a certain name, that begat and brought forth itself, and yet had a sire and dam distinct from itself; that it had an appetite, and was hungry before it had a being; that his master, who led him, and governed him at his pleasure, was always governed by him, and driven by him where he pleased; that when he moved, he always took a step before the first step; that he went with his head first, and yet always went tail foremost; and this, though he had neither head nor tail:" It would be no impudence at all, to tell such a traveller, though a learned man, that he himself had no notion or idea of such an animal, as he gave an account of, and never had, nor ever would have.

As the forementioned notion of action is very inconsistent, so it is wholly diverse from the original meaning of the word. The more usual signification of it, in vulgar speech, seems to be some motion, or exertion of power, that is voluntary, or that is the effect of the Will; and is used in the same sense as doing; and most commonly it is used to signify outward actions. So thinking is often distinguished from acting; and desiring and willing, from doing.

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Besides this more usual and proper signification of the word *action*, there are other ways in which the word is used, that are less proper, which yet have place in common speech. Oftentimes it is used to signify some motion or alteration in inanimate things, with relation to some object and effect. So the spring of a watch is said to act upon the chain and wheels; the sun beams, to act upon plants and trees; and the fire, to act upon wood. Sometimes the word is used to signify motions, alterations, and exertions of power, which are seen in corporeal things, considered absolutely; especially when these motions seem to arise from some internal cause which is hidden; so that they have a greater resemblance of those motions of our bodies, which are the effects of internal volition, or invisible exertions of Will. So the fermentation of liquor, the operations of the loadstone, and of electrical bodies, are called the *action* of these things. And sometimes the word *action* is used to signify the exercise of thought, or of Will and inclination: So meditating, loving, hating, inclining, disinclining, choosing and refusing, may be sometimes called acting; though more rarely (unless it be by philosophers and metaphysicians) than in any of the other senses.

But the word is never used in vulgar speech in that sense which Arminian divines use it in, namely, for the selfdetermínate exercise of the Will, or an exertion of the soul that arises without any necessary connexion, with any thing foregoing. If a man does something voluntarily, or as the effect of his choice, then in the most proper sense, and as the word is most originally and commonly used, he is said to act: But whether that choice or volition be selfdetermined, or no, whether it be connected with foregoing habitual bias, whether it be the certain effect of the strongest motive, or some extrinsic cause, never comes into consideration in the meaning of the word.

And if the word *Action* is arbitrarily used by some men otherwise, to suit some scheme of metaphysics or morality, no argument can reasonably be founded on such a use of this term, to prove any thing but their own pleasure. For divines and philosophers strenuously to urge such arguments, as

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though they were sufficient to support and demonstrate a whole scheme of moral philosophy and divinity, is certainly to erect a mighty edifice on the sand, or rather on a shadow. And though it may now perhaps, through custom, have become natural for them to use the word in this sense (if that may be called a sense or meaning, which is inconsistent with itself) yet this does not prove, that it is agreeable to the natural notions men have of things, or that there can be any thing in the creation that should answer such a meaning. And though they appeal to experience, yet the truth is, that men are so far from experiencing any such thing, that it is impossible for them to have any conception of it.

If it should be objected, that *action* and *passion* are doubtless words of a contrary signification; but to suppose that the agent, in its action, is under the power and influence of something extrinsic, is to confound action and passion, and make them the same thing.

I answer, that action and passion are doubtless, as they are sometimes used, words of opposite signification; but not as signifying opposite *existences*, but only opposite *relations*. The words *cause* and *effect*, are terms of opposite signification; but, nevertheless, if I assert, that the same thing may, at the same time, in different respects and relations, be both *cause* and *effect*, this will not prove that I confound the terms. The soul may be both *active* and *passive* in the same thing in different respects; *active* with relation to one thing, and *passive* with relation to another. The word *passion*, when set in opposition to *action*, or rather *activeness*, is merely a relative term; it signifies no effect or cause, nor any proper existence; but is the same with *passiveness*, or a being passive, or a being acted upon by some thing. Which is a mere relation of a thing to some power or force exerted by some cause, producing some effect in it, or upon it. And *action*, when set properly in opposition to *passion*, or *passiveness*, is no real existence; it is not the same with AN *action*, but is a mere relation: It is the *activeness* of something on another thing, being the opposite relation to the other, viz. a relation of power, or force, exerted by some cause towards another thing,

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which is the subject of the effect of that power. Indeed, the word *action*, is frequently used to signify something not merely *relative*, but more *absolute*, and a real existence; as when we say *an action*; when the word is not used transitively, but absolutely, for some motion or exercise of body or mind, without any relation to any object or effect: And as used thus, it is not properly the opposite of *passion*; which ordinarily signifies nothing absolute, but merely the *relation of being acted upon*. And therefore, if the word *action* be used in the like relative sense, then action and passion are only two contrary relations. And it is no absurdity to suppose, that contrary relations may belong to the same thing, at the same time, with respect to different things. So to suppose, that there are acts of the soul by which a man voluntarily moves, and acts upon objects, and produces effects, which yet themselves are effects of something else, and wherein the soul itself is the object of something acting upon, and influencing that, does not confound action and passion. The words may nevertheless be properly of opposite signification: There may be as true and real a difference between *acting* and being *caused to act*, though we should suppose the soul to be both in the same volition, as there is between *living* and *being quickened* or *made to live*. It is no more a contradiction to suppose that action may be the effect of some other cause, besides the agent, or being that acts, than to suppose, that life may be the effect of some other cause, besides the being that lives, in whom life is caused to be.

The thing which has led men into this inconsistent notion of action, when applied to volition, as though it were essential to this internal action, that the agent should be selfdetermined in it, and that the Will should be the cause of it, was probably this; that according to the sense of mankind, and the common use of language, it is so with respect to men's external actions; which are originally, and according to the vulgar use and most proper sense of the word, called *actions*. Men in these are selfdirected, selfdetermined and their Wills are the cause of the motions of their bodies, and the external things that are done; so that unless men do them volunta-

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rily, and of choice, and the action be determined by their antecedent volition, it is no action or doing of theirs. Hence some metaphysicians have been led unwarily, but absurdly, to suppose the same concerning volition itself, that *that* also must be determined by the Will; which is to be determined by antecedent volition, as the motion of the body is; not considering the contradiction it implies.

But it is very evident, that in the metaphysical distinction between action and passion, (though long since become common and the general vogue) due care has not been taken to conform language to the nature of things, or to any distinct, clear ideas. As it is in innumerable other philosophical, metaphysical terms, used in these disputes; which has occasioned inexpressible difficulty, contention, error and confusion.

And thus probably it came to be thought, that necessity was inconsistent with action, as these terms are applied to volition. First, these terms *action* and *necessity*, are changed from their original meaning, as signifying external, voluntary action and constraint, (in which meaning they are evidently inconsistent) to signify quite other things, viz. volition itself, and certainty of existence. And when the change of signification is made, care is not taken to make proper allowances and abatements for the difference of sense; but still the same things are unwarily attributed to *action* and *necessity*, in the new meaning of the words, which plainly belonged to them in their first sense; and on this ground, maxims are established without any real foundation, as though they were the most certain truths, and the most evident dictates of reason.

But however strenuously it is maintained, that what is necessary cannot be properly called action, and that a necessary action is a contradiction, yet it is probable there are few *Arminian* divines, who, if thoroughly tried, would stand to these principles. They will allow that God is, in the highest sense, an active being, and the highest fountain of life and action; and they would not probably deny, that those, that are called God's acts of righteousness, holiness and faithfulness, are truly and properly God's *acts*, and God is really a holy *agent*

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in them; and yet, I trust, they will not deny, that God necessarily acts justly and faithfully, and that it is impossible for Him to act unrighteously and unholily.

SECTION III.

The Reasons why some think it contrary to common Sense, *to suppose those Things which are* necessary, *to be worthy of either* Praise *or* Blame.

IT is abundantly affirmed and urged by Arminian writers, that it is contrary to *common sense*, and the natural notions and apprehensions of mankind, to suppose otherwise than that necessity (making no distinction between natural and moral necessity) is inconsistent with virtue and vice, praise and blame, reward and punishment. And their arguments from hence have been greatly triumphed in; and have been not a little perplexing to many, who have been friendly to the truth, as clearly revealed in the holy Scriptures; it has seemed to them indeed difficult, to reconcile Calvinistic doctrines with the notions men commonly have of justice and equity. And the true reasons of it seem to be these that follow.

I. It is indeed a very plain dictate of common sense, that natural necessity is wholly inconsistent with just praise or blame. If men do things which in themselves are very good, fit to be brought to pass, and very happy effects, properly against their Wills, and cannot help it; or do them from a necessity that is without their Wills, or with which their Wills have no concern or connexion; then it is a plain dictate of common sense, that it is none of their virtue, nor any moral good in them; and that they are not worthy to be rewarded or praised, esteemed or loved on that account. And,

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on the other hand, that if, from like necessity, they do those things which in themselves are very unhappy and pernicious, and do them because they cannot help it; the necessity is such, that it is all one whether they will them or no; and the reason why they are done, is from necessity only, and not from their Wills; it is a very plain dictate of common sense, that they are not at all to blame; there is no vice, fault, or moral evil at all in the effect done; nor are they, who are thus necessitated, in any wise worthy to be punished, hated, or in the least disrespected, on that account.

In like manner, if things, in themselves good and desirable, are absolutely impossible, with a natural impossibility, the universal reason of mankind teaches, that this wholly and perfectly excuses persons in their not doing them.

And it is also a plain dictate of common sense, that if the doing things, in themselves good, or avoiding things, in themselves evil, is not absolutely impossible, with such a natural impossibility, but very difficult, with a natural difficulty; that is, a difficulty prior to, and not at all consisting in Will and inclination itself, and which would remain the same, let the inclination be what it will; then a person's neglect or omission is excused in some measure, though not wholly; his sin is less aggravated, than if the thing to be done were easy. And if, instead of difficulty and hinderance, there be a contrary natural propensity in the state of things, to the thing to be done, or the effect to be brought to pass, abstracted from any consideration of the inclination of the heart; though the propensity be not so great as to amount to a natural necessity; yet being some approach to it, so that the doing the good thing be very much from this natural tendency in the state of things, and but little from a good inclination; then it is a dictate of common sense, that there is so much the less virtue in what is done; and so it is less praise worthy and rewardable. The reason is easy, viz. because such a natural propensity or tendency is an approach to natural necessity; and the greater the propensity, still so much the nearer is the approach to necessity. And, therefore, as natural necessity takes away or shuts out all virtue, so

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this propensity approaches to an abolition of virtue; that is, it diminishes it. And, on the other hand, natural difficulty, in the state of things, is an approach to natural impossibility. And as the latter, when it is complete and absolute, wholly takes away blame; so such difficulty takes away some blame, or diminishes blame; and makes the thing done to be less worthy of punishment.

II. Men, in their first use of such phrases as these, *must, can't, can't help it, can't avoid it, necessary, unable, impossible, unavoidable, irresistible*, &c. use them to signify a necessity of constraint or restraint, a natural necessity or impossibility; or some necessity that the Will has nothing to do in; which may be whether men will or no; and which may be supposed to be just the same, let men's inclinations and desires be what they will. Such terms in their original use, I suppose, among all nations, are relative; carrying in their signification (as was before observed) a reference or respect to some contrary Will, desire or endeavor, which, it is supposed, is, or may be, in the case. All men find, and begin to find in early childhood, that there are innumerable things that cannot be done, which they desire to do; and innumerable things which they are averse to, that must be, they cannot avoid them, they will be, whether they choose them or no. It is to express this necessity, which men so soon and so often find, and which so greatly and so early affects them in innumerable cases, that such terms and phrases are first formed; and it is to signify such a necessity, that they are first used, and that they are most constantly used, in the common affairs of life; and not to signify any such metaphysical, speculative and abstract notion, as that connexion in the nature or course of things, which is between the subject and predicate of a proposition, and which is the foundation of the certain truth of that proposition, to signify which, they, who employ themselves in philosophical inquiries into the first origin and metaphysical relations and dependencies of things, have borrowed these terms, for want of others. But we grow up from our cradles in a use of such terms and phrases entirely different from this, and carrying a sense exceeding diverse from

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that, in which they are commonly used in the controversy between Arminians and Calvinists. And it being, as was said before, a dictate of the universal sense of mankind, evident to us as soon as we begin to think, that the necessity signified by these terms, in the sense in which we first learn them, does excuse persons and free them from all fault or blame; hence our idea of excusableness or faultiness is tied to these terms and phrases by a strong habit, which is begun in childhood, as soon as we begin to speak, and grows up with us, and is strengthened by constant use and custom, the connexion growing stronger and stronger.

The habitual connexion, which is in men's minds between blamelessness and those forementioned terms, *must*, *cannot*, *unable*, *necessary*, *impossible*, *unavoidable*, &c. becomes very strong; because, as soon as ever men begin to use reason and speech, they have occasion to excuse themselves, from the natural necessity signified by these terms, in numerous instances....*I can't do it*....*I could not help it*....And all mankind have constant and daily occasion to use such phrases in this sense, to excuse themselves and others, in almost all the concerns of life, with respect to disappointments, and things that happen, which concern and affect ourselves and others, that are hurtful, or disagreeable to us or them, or things desirable, that we or others fail of.

That a being accustomed to an union of different ideas, from early childhood, makes the habitual connexion exceeding strong, as though such connexion were owing to nature, is manifest in innumerable instances. It is altogether by such an habitual connexion of ideas, that men judge of the bigness or distance of the objects of sight, from their appearance. Thus it is owing to such a connexion early established, and growing up with a person, that he judges a mountain, which he sees at ten miles distance, to be bigger than his nose, or further off than the end of it. Having been used so long to join a considerable distance and magnitude with such an appearance, men imagine it is by a dictate of natural sense: Whereas, it would be quite otherwise with one that had his eyes newly opened, who had been born blind; he would have

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the same visible appearance, but natural sense would dictate no such thing, concerning the magnitude or distance of what appeared.

III. When men, after they have been so habituated to connect ideas of innocency or blamelessness with such terms, that the union seems to be the effect of mere nature, come to hear the same terms used, and learn to use them themselves in the forementioned new and metaphysical sense, to signify quite another sort of necessity, which has no such kind of relation to a contrary supposable Will and endeavor; the notion of plain and manifest blamelessness, by this means, is, by a strong prejudice, insensibly and unwarily transferred to a case to which it by no means belongs; the change of the use of the terms, to a signification which is very diverse, not being taken notice of, or adverted to. And there are several reasons, why it is not.

1. The terms, as used by philosophers, are not very distinct and clear in their meaning; few use them in a fixed, determined sense. On the contrary, their meaning is very vague and confused. Which is what commonly happens to the words used to signify things intellectual and moral, and to express what Mr. Locke calls *mixt modes*. If men had a clear and distinct understanding of what is intended by these metaphysical terms, they would be able more easily to compare them with their original and common sense; and so would not be so easily led into delusion by words of this sort.

2. The change of the signification of the terms is the more insensible, because the things signified, though indeed very different, yet do in some generals agree. In necessity, that which is *vulgarly* so called, there is a strong connexion between the thing said to be necessary, and something antecedent to it, in the order of nature; so there is also in philosophical necessity. And though in both kinds of necessity, the connexion cannot be called by that name, with relation to an opposite Will or endeavor, to which it is *superior*; which is the case in vulgar necessity; yet in both, the connexion is *prior* to Will and endeavor, and so, in some respect, *superior*. In both kinds of necessity, there is a foundation for some cer-

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tainty of the proposition, that affirms the event. The terms used being the same, and the things signified agreeing in these and some other general circumstances, and the expressions, as used by philosophers being not well defined, and so of obscure and loose signification; hence persons are not aware of the great difference; and the notions of innocence or faultiness, which were so strongly associated with them, and were strictly united in their minds, ever since they can remember, remain united with them still, as if the union were altogether natural and necessary; and they that go about to make a separation, seem to them to do great violence even to nature itself.

IV. Another reason why it appears difficult to reconcile it with reason, that men should be blamed for that which is necessary with a moral necessity (which, as was observed before, is a species of philosophical necessity) is, that for want of due consideration, men inwardly entertain that apprehension, that this necessity may be against men's Wills and sincere endeavors. They go away with that notion, that men may truly will, and wish, and strive, that it may be otherwise, but that invincible necessity stands in the way. And many think thus concerning themselves: Some, that are wicked men, think they wish, that they were good, that they loved God and holiness; but yet do not find that their wishes produce the effect....The reasons why men think thus, are as follow: (1.) They find what may be called an indirect willingness to have a better Will, in the manner before observed. For it is impossible, and a contradiction to suppose the Will to be directly and properly against itself. And they do not consider, that this indirect willingness is entirely a different thing from properly willing the thing that is the duty and virtue required; and that there is no virtue in that sort of willingness which they have. They do not consider, that the volitions, which a wicked man may have that he loved God, are no acts of the Will at all against the moral evil of not loving God; but only some disagreeable consequences. But the making the requisite distinction requires more care of reflection and thought, than most men are used to. And men,

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through a prejudice in their own favor, are disposed to think well of their own desires and dispositions, and to account them good and virtuous, though their respect to virtue be only indirect and remote, and it is nothing at all that is virtuous that truly excites or terminates their inclinations. (2.) Another thing, that insensibly leads and beguiles men into a supposition that this moral necessity or impossibility is, or may be against men's Wills and true endeavors, is the derivation and formation of the terms themselves, that are often used to express it, which is such as seems directly to point to, and holds this forth. Such words, for instance, as *unable*, *unavoidable*, *impossible*, *irresistible*; which carry a plain reference to a supposable power exerted, endeavors used, resistance made, in opposition to the necessity; and the persons that hear them, not considering nor suspecting but that they are used in their proper sense; that sense being therefore understood, there does naturally, and as it were necessarily, arise in their minds a supposition, that it may be so indeed, that true desires and endeavors may take place, but that invincible necessity stands in the way, and renders them vain and to no effect.

V. Another thing, which makes persons more ready to suppose it to be contrary to reason, that men should be exposed to the punishments threatened to sin, for doing those things which are morally necessary, or not doing those things morally impossible, is, that imagination strengthens the argument, and adds greatly to the power and influence of the seeming reasons against it, from the greatness of that punishment. To allow that they may be justly exposed to a small punishment, would not be so difficult. Whereas, if there were any good reason in the case, if it were truly a dictate of reason, that such necessity was inconsistent with faultiness, or just punishment, the demonstration would be equally certain with respect to a small punishment, or any punishment at all, as a very great one; but it is not equally easy to the imagination. They that argue against the justice of *damning* men for those things that are thus necessary, seem to make their argument the stronger, by setting forth the greatness of the punishment

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in strong expressions....*That a man should be cast into eternal burnings, that he should be made to fry in hell to all eternity for those things which he had no power to avoid, and was under a fatal, unfrustrable, invincible necessity of doing.*

SECTION IV.

It is agreeable to Common Sense, *and* the Natural Notions of Mankind, *to suppose moral Necessity to be consistent with Praise and Blame, Reward and Punishment.*

WHETHER the reasons that have been given, why it appears difficult to some persons, to reconcile with common sense the praising or blaming, rewarding or punishing, those things which are morally necessary, are thought satisfactory or not; yet it most evidently appears, by the following things, that if this matter be rightly understood, setting aside all delusion arising from the impropriety and ambiguity of terms, this is not at all inconsistent with the natural apprehensions of mankind, and that sense of things which is found everywhere in the common people; who are furthest from having their thoughts perverted from their natural channel, by metaphysical and philosophical subtilties; but, on the contrary, altogether agreeable to, and the very voice and dictate of, this natural and vulgar sense.

I. This will appear, if we consider what the vulgar notion of blameworthiness is. The idea which the common people, through all ages and nations, have of faultiness, I suppose to be plainly this; a person's being or doing wrong, with his own will and pleasure; containing these two things: 1. His doing wrong when he does as he pleases. 2. His pleasure's being wrong. Or, in other words, perhaps more intelligibly

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expressing their notion; a person's having his heart wrong, and doing wrong from his heart. And this is the sum total of the matter.

The common people do not ascend up in their reflections and abstractions to the metaphysical sources, relations and dependencies of things, in order to form their notion of faultiness or blameworthiness. They do not wait till they have decided by their refinings, what first determines the Will; whether it be determined by something extrinsic, or intrinsic; whether volition determines volition, or whether the understanding determines the Will; whether there be any such thing as metaphysicians mean by contingence (if they have any meaning;) whether there be a sort of a strange, unaccountable sovereignty in the Will, in the exercise of which, by its own sovereign acts, it brings to pass all its own sovereign acts. They do not take any part of their notion of fault or blame from the resolution of any such questions. If this were the case, there are multitudes, yea, the far greater part of mankind, nine hundred and ninetynine out of a thousand, would live and die, without having any such notion, as that of fault, ever entering into their heads, or without so much as once having any conception that any body was to be either blamed or commended for any thing. To be sure, it would be a long time before men came to have such notions. Whereas it is manifest, they are some of the first notions that appear in children; who discover, as soon as they can think, or speak, or act at all as rational creatures, a sense of desert. And, certainly, in forming their notion of it, they make no use of metaphysics. All the ground they go upon, consists in these two things; experience, and a natural sensation of a certain fitness or agreeableness, which there is in uniting such moral evil as is above described, viz. a being or doing wrong with the Will, and resentment in others, and pain inflicted on the person in whom this moral evil is. Which natural sense is what we call by the name of conscience.

It is true, the common people and children, in their notion of a faulty act or deed, of any person, do suppose that it is the person's own act and deed. But this is all that belongs

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to what they understand by a thing's being a person's own deed or action; even that it is something done by him of choice. That some exercise or motion should begin of itself, does not belong to their notion of an action, or doing. If so, it would belong to their notion of it, that it is something, which is the cause of its own beginning; and that is as much as to say, that it is before it begins to be. Nor is their notion of an action some motion or exercise, that begins accidentally, without any cause or reason; for that is contrary to one of the prime dictates of common sense, namely, that every thing that begins to be, has some cause or reason why it is.

The common people, in their notion of a faulty or praiseworthy deed or work done by any one, do suppose, that the man does it in the exercise of liberty. But then their notion of liberty is only a person's having opportunity of doing as he pleases. They have no notion of liberty consisting in the Will's first acting, and so causing its own acts; and determining, and so causing its own determinations; or choosing, and so causing its own choice. Such a notion of liberty is what none have, but those that have darkened their own minds with confused, metaphysical speculation, and abstruse and ambiguous terms. If a man is not restrained from acting as his Will determines, or constrained to act otherwise; then he has liberty, according to common notions of liberty, without taking into the idea that grand contradiction of all, the determinations of a man's free Will being the effects of the determinations of his free Will. Nor have men commonly any notion of freedom consisting in indifference. For if so, then it would be agreeable to their notion, that the greater indifference men act with, the more freedom they act with; whereas, the reverse is true. He that in acting, proceeds with the fullest inclination, does what he does with the greatest freedom, according to common sense. And so far is it from being agreeable to common sense, that such liberty as consists in indifference is requisite to praise or blame, that on the contrary, the dictate of every man's natural sense through the world is, that the further he is from being indifferent in his acting good or evil, and the more he does either with or

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without full and strong inclination, the more is he to be esteemed or abhorred, commended or condemned.

II. If it were inconsistent with the common sense of mankind, that men should be either to be blamed or commended in any volitions, they have, or fail of, in case of moral necessity or impossibility; then it would surely also be agreeable to the same sense and reason of mankind, that the nearer the case approaches to such a moral necessity or impossibility, either through a strong antecedent moral propensity, on the one hand,* or a great antecedent opposition and difficulty on the other, the nearer does it approach to a being neither blameable nor commendable; so that acts exerted with such preceding propensity, would be worthy of proportionably less praise; and when omitted, the act being attended with such difficulty, the omission would be worthy of the less blame. It is so, as was observed before, with natural necessity and impossibility, propensity and difficulty; as it is a plain dictate of the sense of all mankind, that natural necessity and impossibility take away all blame and praise; and therefore, that the nearer the approach is to these, through previous propensity or difficulty, so praise and blame are proportionably diminished. And if it were as much a dictate of common sense, that moral necessity of doing, or impossibility of avoiding, takes away all praise and blame, as that natural necessity or impossibility does this; then, by a perfect parity of reason, it would be as much the dictate of common sense, that an approach to moral necessity of doing, or impossibility of avoiding, diminishes praise and blame, as that an approach to natural necessity and impossibility does so. It is equally the voice of common sense, that persons are excusable in part, in neglecting things difficult against their Wills, as that they are excusable wholly in neglecting things impossible against their Wills. And if it made no difference whether the impossibility were natural and against the Will, or moral, lying in the Will, with regard to excusableness; so neither would it make

* It is here argued, on supposition that not all propensity implies moral necessity, but only some very high degree; which none will deny.

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any difference, whether the difficulty, or approach to necessity be natural against the Will, or moral, lying in the propensity of the Will.

But it is apparent, that the reverse of these things is true. If there be an approach to a moral necessity in a man's exertion of good acts of Will, they being the exercise of a strong propensity to good, and a very powerful love to virtue; it is so far from being the dictate of common sense, that he is less virtuous, and the less to be esteemed, loved and praised; that it is agreeable to the natural notions of all mankind, that he is so much the better man, worthy of greater respect, and higher commendation. And the stronger the inclination is, and the nearer it approaches to necessity in that respect; or to impossibility of neglecting the virtuous act, or of doing a vicious one, still the more virtuous, and worthy of higher commendation. And, on the other hand, if a man exerts evil acts of mind; as, for instance, acts of pride or malice from a rooted and strong habit, or principle of haughtiness and maliciousness, and a violent propensity of heart to such acts; according to the natural sense of all men, he is so far from being the less hateful and blameable on that account, that he is so much the more worthy to be detested and condemned, by all that observe him.

Moreover, it is manifest that it is no part of the notion, which mankind commonly have of a blameable or praiseworthy act of the Will, that it is an act which is not determined by an antecedent bias or motive, but by the sovereign power of the Will itself; because, if so, the greater hand such causes have in determining any acts of the Will, so much the less virtuous or vicious would they be accounted; and the less hand, the more virtuous or vicious. Whereas, the reverse is true: Men do not think a good act to be the less praiseworthy, for the agent's being much determined in it by a good inclination or a good motive, but the more. And if good inclination or motive, has but little influence in determining the agent, they do not think his act so much the more virtuous, but the less. And so concerning evil acts, which are determined by evil motives or inclinations.

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Yea, if it be supposed that good or evil dispositions are implanted in the hearts of men, by nature itself, (which, it is certain, is vulgarly supposed in innumerable cases) yet it is not commonly supposed, that men are worthy of no praise or dispraise for such dispositions; although what is natural, is undoubtedly necessary, nature being prior to all acts of the Will whatsoever. Thus, for instance, if a man appears to be of a very haughty or malicious disposition, and is supposed to be so by his natural temper, it is no vulgar notion, no dictate of the common sense and apprehension of men, that such dispositions are no vices or moral evils, or that such persons are not worthy of disesteem, odium and dishonor; or that the proud or malicious acts which flow from such natural dispositions, are worthy of no resentment. Yea, such vile natural dispositions, and the strength of them, will commonly be mentioned rather as an aggravation of the wicked acts, that come from such a fountain, than an extenuation of them. Its being natural for men to act thus, is often observed by men in the height of their indignation: They will say, "It is his very nature: He is of a vile natural temper: It is as natural to him to act so as it is to breathe; he cannot help serving the devil," &c. But it is not thus with regard to hurtful, mischievous things, that any are the subjects or occasions of, by a natural necessity, against their inclinations. In such a case, the necessity, by the common voice of mankind, will be spoken of as a full excuse. Thus it is very plain, that common sense makes a vast difference between these two kinds of necessity, as to the judgment it makes of their influence on the moral quality and desert of men's actions.

And these dictates of men's minds are so natural and necessary, that it may be very much doubted whether the *Arminians* themselves have ever got rid of them; yea, their greatest doctors, that have gone furthest in defence of their metaphysical notions of liberty, and have brought their arguments to their greatest strength, and, as they suppose, to a demonstration, against the consistence of virtue and vice with any necessity; it is to be questioned, whether there is so much

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as one of them, but that, if he suffered very much from the injurious acts of a man, under the power of an invincible haughtiness and malignancy of temper, would not, from the forementioned natural sense of mind, resent it far otherwise, than if as great sufferings came upon him from the wind that blows, and fire that burns by natural necessity; and otherwise than he would, if he suffered as much from the conduct of a man perfectly delirious; yea, though he first brought his distraction upon him some way by his own fault.

Some seem to disdain the distinction that we make between natural and moral necessity, as though it were altogether impertinent in this controversy: "That which is necessary, say they, is necessary; it is that which must be, and cannot be prevented. And that which is impossible, is impossible, and cannot be done; and therefore, none can be to blame for not doing it." And such comparisons are made use of, as the commanding of a man to walk, who has lost his legs, and condemning and punishing him for not obeying; inviting and calling upon a man, who is shut up in a strong prison, to come forth, &c. But, in these things, Arminians are very unreasonable. Let common sense determine whether there be not a great difference between those two cases; the one, that of a man who has offended his prince, and is cast into prison; and after he has lain there a while, the king comes to him, calls him to come forth to him, and tells him, that if he will do so, and will fall down before him, and humbly beg his pardon, he shall be forgiven, and set at liberty, and also be greatly enriched and advanced to honor: The prisoner heartily repents of the folly and wickedness of his offence against his prince, is thoroughly disposed to abase himself, and accept of the king's offer; but is confined by strong walls, with gates of brass, and bars of iron. The other case is, that of a man who is of a very unreasonable spirit, of a haughty, ungrateful, wilful disposition, and, moreover, has been brought up in traitorous principles, and has his heart possessed with an extreme and inveterate enmity to his lawful sovereign; and for his rebellion is cast into prison, and lies long there, loaden with heavy chains, and in miserable circumstan-

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ces. At length the compassionate prince comes to the prison, orders his chains to be knocked off, and his prison doors to be set wide open; calls to him, and tells him, if he will come forth to him, and fall down before him, acknowledge that he has treated him unworthily, and ask his forgiveness; he shall be forgiven, set at liberty, and set in a place of great dignity and profit in his court. But he is so stout and stomachful, and full of haughty malignity, that he cannot be willing to accept the offer: His rooted, strong pride and malice have perfect power over him, and as it were bind him, by binding his heart: The opposition of his heart has the mastery over him, having an influence on his mind far superior to the king's grace and condescension, and to all his kind offers and promises. Now, is it agreeable to common sense to assert and stand to it, that there is no difference between these two cases, as to any worthiness of blame in the prisoners; because, forsooth, there is a necessity in both, and the required act in each case is impossible? It is true, a man's evil dispositions may be as strong and immoveable as the bars of a castle. But who cannot see, that when a man, in the latter case, is said to be unable to obey the command, the expression is used improperly, and not in the sense it has originally and in common speech? And that it may properly be said to be in the rebel's power to come out of prison, seeing he can easily do it if he pleases; though by reason of his vile temper of heart, which is fixed and rooted, it is impossible that it should please him?

Upon the whole, I presume there is no person of good understanding, who impartially considers the things which have been observed, but will allow, that it is not evident, from the dictates of the common sense, or natural notions of mankind, that moral necessity is inconsistent with praise and blame. And therefore, if the Arminians would prove any such inconsistency, it must be by some philosophical and metaphysical arguments, and not common sense.

There is a grand illusion in the pretended demonstration of Arminians from common sense. The main strength of all these demonstrations lies in that prejudice, that arises

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through the insensible change of the use and meaning of such terms as *liberty*, *able*, *unable*, *necessary*, *impossible*, *unavoidable*, *invincible*, *action*, &c. from their original and vulgar sense, to a metaphysical sense, entirely diverse; and the strong connexion of the ideas of blamelessness, &c. with some of these terms, by an habit contracted and established, while these terms were used in their first meaning. This prejudice and delusion is the foundation of all those positions, they lay down as maxims, by which most of the scriptures, which they allege in this controversy, are interpreted, and on which all their pompous demonstrations from scripture and reason depend. From this secret delusion and prejudice they have almost all their advantages; it is the strength of their bulwarks, and the edge of their weapons. And this is the main ground of all the right they have to treat their neighbors in so assuming a manner, and to insult others, perhaps as wise and good as themselves, as *weak bigots*, *men that dwell in the dark caves of superstition*, *perversely set*, *obstinately shutting their eyes against the noonday light*, *enemies to common sense*, *maintaining the first born of absurdities*, &c. &c. But perhaps an impartial consideration of the things, which have been observed in the preceding parts of this inquiry, may enable the lovers of truth better to judge, whose doctrine is indeed *absurd*, *abstruse*, *self contradictory*, and inconsistent with common sense, and many ways repugnant to the universal dictates of the reason of mankind.

Corol. From things which have been observed, it will follow, that it is agreeable to common sense to suppose, that the glorified saints have not their freedom at all diminished, in any respect; and that God himself has the highest possible freedom, according to the true and proper meaning of the term; and that he is, in the highest possible respect, an agent, and active in the exercise of his infinite holiness; though he acts therein, in the highest degree, necessarily; and his actions of this kind are in the highest, most absolutely perfect manner, virtuous and praiseworthy; and are so, for that very reason, because they are most perfectly necessary.

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SECTION V.

Concerning those Objections, *that this Scheme of Necessity renders all* Means *and* Endeavors *for the avoiding of Sin, or the obtaining Virtue and Holiness, vain and to no purpose; and that it makes Men no more than mere* Machines *in Affairs of Morality and Religion.*

ARMINIANS say, if it be so, that sin and virtue come to pass by a necessity consisting in a sure connexion of causes and effects, antecedents and consequents, it can never be worth the while to use any means or endeavors to obtain the one, and avoid the other; seeing no endeavors can alter the futurity of the event, which is become necessary by a connexion already established.

But I desire, that this matter may be fully considered; and that it may be examined with a thorough strictness, whether it will follow that endeavors and means, in order to avoid or obtain any future thing, must be more in vain, on the supposition of such a connexion of antecedents and consequents, than if the contrary be supposed.

For endeavors to be in vain, is for them not to be successful; that is to say, for them not eventually to be the means of the thing aimed at, which cannot be, but in one of these two ways; either, first, That although the means are used, yet the event aimed at does not follow; or, secondly, If the event does follow, it is not because of the means, or from any connexion or dependence of the event on the means, the event would have come to pass, as well without the means as with them. If either of these two things are the case, then the means are not properly successful, and are truly in vain. The successfulness or unsuccessfulness of means, in

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order to an effect, or their being in vain or not in vain, consists in those means being connected, or not connected with the effect, in such a manner as this, viz. That the effect is with the means, and not without them; or that the being of the effect is, on the one hand, connected with the means, and the want of the effect, on the other hand, is connected with the want of the means. If there be such a connexion as this between means and end, the means are not in vain. The more there is of such a connexion, the further they are from being in vain; and the less of such a connexion, the more they are in vain.

Now, therefore, the question to be answered, (in order to determine, whether it follows from this doctrine of the necessary connexion between foregoing things, and consequent ones, that means used in order to any effect, are more in vain than they would be otherwise) is, whether it follows from it, that there is less of the forementioned connexion between means and effect; that is, whether, on the supposition of there being a real and true connexion between antecedent things and consequent ones, there must be less of a connexion between means and effect, than on the supposition of there being no fixed connexion between antecedent things and consequent ones; and the very stating of this question is sufficient to answer it. It must appear to every one that will open his eyes, that this question cannot be affirmed, without the grossest absurdity and inconsistence. Means are foregoing things, and effects are following things; and if there were no connexion between foregoing things and following ones, there could be no connexion between means and end; and so all means would be wholly vain and fruitless. For it is by virtue of some connexion only, that they become successful: It is some connexion observed, or revealed, or otherwise known, between antecedent things and following ones, that is, what directs in the choice of means. And if there were no such thing as an established connexion, there could be no choice, as to means; one thing would have no more tendency to an effect, than another; there would be no such thing as tendency in the case. All those things which are

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successful means of other things, do therein prove connected antecedents of them; and therefore to assert, that a fixed connexion between antecedents and consequents makes means vain and useless, or stands in the way to hinder the connexion between means and end, is just as ridiculous as to to say, that a connexion between antecedents and consequents stands in the way to hinder a connexion between antecedents and consequents.

Nor can any supposed connexion of the succession or train of antecedents and consequents, from the very beginning of all things, the connexion being made already sure and necessary, either by established laws of nature, or by these together with a decree of sovereign immediate interpositions of divine power, on such and such occasions, or any other way (if any other there be;) I say, no such necessary connexion of a series of antecedents and consequents can in the least tend to hinder, but that the means we use may belong to the series; and so may be some of those antecedents which are connected with the consequents we aim at, in the established course of things. Endeavors which we use, are things that exist; and, therefore, they belong to the general chain of events; all the parts of which chain are supposed to be connected; and so endeavors are supposed to be connected with some effects, or some consequent things or other. And certainly this does not hinder but that the events they are connected with, may be those which we aim at, and which we choose, because we judge them most likely to have a connexion with those events, from the established order and course of things which we observe, or from something in divine revelation.

Let us suppose a real and sure connexion between a man's having his eyes open in the clear day light, with good organs of sight, and seeing; so that seeing is connected with his opening his eyes, and not seeing with his not opening his eyes; and also the like connexion between such a man's attempting to open his eyes, and his actually doing it. The supposed established connexion between these antecedents and consequents, let the connexion be ever so sure and necessary, certainly does not prove that it is in vain, for a man in such cir-

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cumstances, to attempt to open his eyes, in order to seeing; his aiming at that event, and the use of the means, being the effect of his Will, does not break the connexion, or hinder the success.

So that the objection we are upon does not lie against the doctrine of the necessity of events by a certainty of connexion and consequence: On the contrary, it is truly forcible against the *Arminian* doctrine of contingence and selfdetermination; which is inconsistent with such a connexion. If there be no connexion between those events, wherein virtue and vice consist, and any thing antecedent; then there is no connexion between these events and any means or endeavors used in order to them; and if so, then those means must be vain. The less there is of connexion between foregoing things and following ones, so much the less there is between means and end, endeavors and success; and in same proportion are means and endeavors ineffectual and vain.

It will follow from *Arminian* principles, that there is no degree of connexion between virtue or vice, and any foregoing event or thing; or, in other words, that the determination of the existence of virtue or vice does not in the least depend on the influence of any thing that comes to pass antecedently, from which the determination of its existence is, as its cause, means, or ground; because, so far as it is so, it is not from selfdetermination; and, therefore, so far there is nothing of the nature of virtue or vice. And so it follows, that virtue and vice are not in any degree, dependent upon, or connected with, any foregoing event or existence, as its cause, ground, or means. And if so, then all foregoing means must be totally vain.

Hence it follows, that there cannot, in any consistence with the *Arminian* scheme, be any reasonable ground of so much as a conjecture concerning the consequence of any means and endeavors, in order to escaping vice or obtaining virtue, or any choice or preference of means, as having a greater probability of success by some than others; either from any natural connexion or dependence of the end on the means, or through any divine constitution, or revealed way of

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God's bestowing or bringing to pass these things, in consequence of any means, endeavors, prayers or deeds. Conjecture, in this latter case, depends on a supposition, that God himself is the giver, or determining cause of the events sought; but if they depend on selfdetermination, then God is not the determining or disposing author of them; and if these things are not of his disposal, then no conjecture can be made, from any revelation he has given, concerning any way or method of his disposal of them.

Yea, on these principles, it will not only follow, that men cannot have any reasonable ground of judgment or conjecture, that their means and endeavors to obtain virtue or avoid vice, will be successful, but they may be sure, they will not; they may be certain, that they will be vain; and that if ever the thing, which they seek, comes to pass, it will not be at all owing to the means they use. For means and endeavors can have no effect, in order to obtain the end, but in one of these two ways; either, (1.) Through a natural tendency and influence, to prepare and dispose the mind more to virtuous acts, either by causing the disposition of the heart to be more in favor of such acts, or by bringing the mind more into the view of powerful motives and inducements; or, (2.) By putting persons more in the way of God's bestowment of the benefit. But neither of these can be the case. Not the latter; for, as has been just now observed, it does not consist with the *Arminian* notion of selfdetermination, which they suppose essential to virtue, that God should be the bestower, or (which is the same thing) the determining, disposing author of virtue. Not the former, for natural influence and tendency supposes causality and connexion; and that supposes necessity of event, which is inconsistent with *Arminian* liberty. A tendency of means, by biasing the heart in favor of virtue, or by bringing the Will under the influence and power of motives in its determinations, are both inconsistent with *Arminian* liberty of Will, consisting in indifference, and sovereign selfdetermination, as has been largely demonstrated.

But for the more full removal of this prejudice against the doctrine of necessity, which has been maintained, as though

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it tended to encourage a total neglect of all endeavors as vain; the following things may be considered.

The question is not, whether men may not thus improve this doctrine: We know that many true and wholesome doctrines are abused; but, whether the doctrine gives any just occasion for such an improvement; or whether, on the supposition of the truth of the doctrine, such a use of it would not be unreasonable? If any shall affirm, that it would not, but that the very nature of the doctrine is such as gives just occasion for it, it must be on this supposition, namely, that such an invariable necessity of all things already settled, must render the interposition of all means, endeavors, conclusions or actions of ours, in order to the obtaining any future end whatsoever, perfectly insignificant; because they cannot in the least alter or vary the course and series of things, in any event or circumstance; all being already fixed unalterably by necessity; and that therefore it is folly, for men to use any means for any end; but their wisdom, to save themselves the trouble of endeavors, and take their ease. No person can draw such an inference from this doctrine, and come to such a conclusion, without contradicting himself, and going counter to the very principles he pretends to act upon; for he comes to a conclusion, and takes a course, in order to an end, even his ease, or the saving himself from trouble; he seeks something future, and uses means in order to a future thing, even in his drawing up that conclusion, that he will seek nothing, and use no means in order to any thing in future; he seeks his future ease, and the benefit and comfort of indolence. If prior necessity, that determines all things, makes vain all actions or conclusions of ours, in order to any thing future; then it makes vain all conclusions and conduct of ours, in order to our future ease. The measure of our ease, with the time, manner, and every circumstance of it, is already fixed, by all-determining necessity, as much as any thing else. If he says within himself, "What future happiness or misery I shall have, is already, in effect, determined by the necessary course and connexion of things; therefore, I will save myself the trouble of labor and diligence, which cannot add to my deter-

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mined degree of happiness, or diminish my misery; but will take my ease, and will enjoy the comfort of sloth and negligence." Such a man contradicts himself; he says, the measure of his future happiness and misery is already fixed, and he will not try to diminish the one, nor add to the other; but yet, in his very conclusion, he contradicts this; for, he takes up this conclusion, to add to his future happiness, by the ease and comfort of his negligence; and to diminish his future trouble and misery, by saving himself the trouble of using means and taking pains.

Therefore persons cannot reasonably make this improvement of the doctrine of necessity, that they will go into a voluntary negligence of means for their own happiness. For the principles they must go upon in order to this, are inconsistent with their making any improvement at all of the doctrine; for to make some improvement of it, is to be influenced by it, to come to some voluntary conclusion, in regard to their own conduct, with some view or aim; but this, as has been shown, is inconsistent with the principles they pretend to act upon. In short, the principles are such as cannot be acted upon, in any respect, consistently. And, therefore, in every pretence of acting upon them, or making any improvement of them, there is a selfcontradiction.

As to that objection against the doctrine, which I have endeavored to prove, that it makes men no more than mere machines; I would say, that notwithstanding this doctrine, man is entirely, perfectly and unspeakably different from a mere machine, in that he has reason and understanding, and has a faculty of Will, and so is capable of volition and choice; and in that, his Will is guided by the dictates or views of his understanding; and in that his external actions and behavior, and, in many respects, also his thoughts, and the exercises of his mind, are subject to his Will; so that he has liberty to act according to his choice, and do what he pleases; and by means of these things, is capable of moral habits and moral acts, such inclinations and actions as, according to the common sense of mankind, are worthy of praise, esteem, love and

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reward; or, on the contrary, of disesteem, detestation, indignation and punishment.

In these things is all the difference from mere machines, as to liberty and agency, that would be any perfection, dignity or privilege, in any respect; all the difference that can be desired, and all that can be conceived of; and indeed all that the pretensions of the *Arminians* themselves come to, as they are forced often to explain themselves. (Though their explications overthrow and abolish the things asserted, and pretended to be explained) for they are forced to explain a self-determining power of Will, by a power in the soul, to determine as it chooses or Wills; which comes to no more than this, that a man has a power of choosing, and, in many instances, can do as he chooses. Which is quite a different thing from that contradiction, his having power of choosing his first act of choice in the case.

Or, if their scheme makes any other difference than this, between men and machines, it is for the worse; it is so far from supposing men to have a dignity and privilege above machines, that it makes the manner of their being determined still more unhappy. Whereas, machines, are guided by an understanding cause, by the skilful hand of the workman or owner; the Will of man is left to the guidance of nothing, but absolute blind contingence.

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SECTION VI.

Concerning that Objection *against the Doctrine which has been maintained, that it agrees with the* Stoical *Doctrine of* Fate, *and the Opinions of Mr. Hobbes.*

WHEN *Calvinists* oppose the *Arminian* notion of the freedom of Will, and contingence of volition, and insist that there are no acts of the Will, nor any other events whatsoever, but what are attended with some kind of necessity; their opposers cry out of them, as agreeing with the ancient *Stoics* in their doctrine of *fate*, and with Mr. Hobbes in his opinion of necessity.

It would not be worth while to take notice of so impertinent an objection, had it not been urged by some of the chief *Arminian* writers. There were many important truths maintained by the ancient *Greek* and *Roman* philosophers, and especially the *Stoics*, that are never the worse for being held by them. The *Stoic* philosophers, by the general agreement of Christian, and even *Arminian* divines, were the greatest, wisest, and most virtuous of all the heathen philosophers; and, in their doctrine and practice, came the nearest to Christianity of any of their sects. How frequently are the sayings of these philosophers, in many of the writings and sermons, even of *Arminian* divines, produced, not as arguments of the falseness of the doctrines which they delivered, but as a confirmation of some of the greatest truths of the Christian religion, relating to the unity and perfections of the Godhead, a future state, the duty and happiness of mankind, &c. as observing how the light of nature and reason, in the wisest and best of the Heathens, harmonized with, and confirms the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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And it is very remarkable, concerning Dr. Whitby, that although he alleges the agreement of the *Stoics* with us, wherein he supposes they maintained the like doctrine with us, as an argument against the truth of our doctrine; yet, this very Dr. Whitby alleges the agreement of the *Stoics* with the *Arminians*, wherein he supposes they taught the same doctrine with them, as an argument for the truth of their doctrine.* So that, when the *Stoics* agree with them, this (it seems) is a confirmation of their doctrine, and a confutation of ours, as shewing that our opinions are contrary to the natural sense and common reason of mankind: Nevertheless, when the *Stoics* agree with us, it argues no such thing in our favor; but, on the contrary, is a great argument against us, and shews our doctrine to be heathenish.

It is observed by some *Calvinistic* writers, that the *Arminians* symbolize with the *Stoics*, in some of those doctrines wherein they are opposed by the *Calvinists*; particularly in their denying an original, innate, total corruption and depravity of heart; and in what they held of man's ability to make himself truly virtuous and conformed to God; and in some other doctrines.

It may be further observed, it is certainly no better objection against our doctrine, that it agrees, in some respects, with the doctrine of the ancient *Stoic* philosophers, than it is against theirs, wherein they differ from us, that it agrees, in some respects, with the opinion of the very worst of the heathen philosophers, the followers of Epicurus, that father of atheism and licentiousness, and with the doctrine of the Sadducees and Jesuits.

I am not much concerned to know precisely, what the ancient *Stoic* philosophers held concerning fate, in order to determine what is truth; as though it were a sure way to be in the right, to take good heed to differ from them. It seems, that they differed among themselves; and probably the doctrine of fate as maintained by most of them, was, in some respects, erroneous. But whatever their doctrine was, if any of

* *Whitby* on the Five Points, Edit. III. p. 325, 326, 327.

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them held such a fate, as is repugnant to any liberty, consisting in our doing as we please, I utterly deny such a fate. If they held any such fate, as is not consistent with the common and universal notions that mankind have of liberty, activity, moral agency, virtue and vice, I disclaim any such thing, and think I have demonstrated that the scheme I maintain is no such scheme. If the *Stoics*, by *fate*, meant any thing of such a nature, as can be supposed to stand in the way of the advantage and benefit of the use of means and endeavors, or makes it less worth the while for men to desire, and seek after any thing wherein their virtue and happiness consists; I hold no doctrine that is clogged with any such inconvenience, any more than any other scheme whatsoever; and by no means so much as the *Arminian* scheme of contingence; as has been shewn. If they held any such doctrine of universal fatality, as is inconsistent with any kind of liberty, that is or can be any perfection, dignity, privilege or benefit, or any thing desirable, in any respect, for any intelligent creature, or indeed with any liberty that is possible or conceivable; I embrace no such doctrine. If they held any such doctrine of fate, as is inconsistent with the world's being in all things subject to the disposal of an intelligent, wise agent, that presides, not as the soul of the world, but as the Sovereign Lord of the Universe, governing all things by proper will, choice and design, in the exercise of the most perfect liberty conceivable, without subjection to any constraint, or being properly under the power or influence of any thing before, above or without himself, I wholly renounce any such doctrine.

As to Mr. Hobbes' maintaining the same doctrine concerning necessity, I confess, it happens I never read Mr. Hobbes. Let his opinion be what it will, we need not reject all truth which is demonstrated by clear evidence, merely because it was once held by some bad man. This great truth, *that Jesus is the Son of God*, was not spoiled because it was once and again proclaimed with a loud voice by the devil. If truth is so defiled, because it is spoken by the mouth, or written by the pen of some illminded mischievous man, that it must never be received, we shall never know, when we hold any of the

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most precious and evident truths by a sure tenure. And if Mr. Hobbes has made a bad use of this truth, that is to be lamented; but the truth is not to be thought worthy of rejection on that account. It is common for the corruptions of the hearts of evil men to abuse the best things to vile purposes.

I might also take notice of its having been observed, that the Arminians agree with Mr. Hobbes in many more things than the Calvinists.* As, in what he is said to hold concerning original sin, in denying the necessity of supernatural illumination, in denying infused grace, in denying the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and other things.

SECTION VII.

Concerning the Necessity *of the* Divine Will.

SOME may possibly object against what has been supposed of the absurdity and inconsistence of a selfdetermining power in the Will, and the impossibility of its being otherwise, than that the Will should be determined in every case by some motive, and by a motive, which, (as it stands in the view of the understanding) is of superior strength to any appearing on the other side; that if these things are true, it will follow, that not only the Will of created minds, but the Will of God himself is necessary in all its determinations. Concerning which, says the author of the *Essay on the Freedom of the Will in God and in the Creature*, page 85, 86, "What strange doctrine is this, contrary to all our ideas of the dominion of God? Does it not destroy the glory of his liberty of choice, and take away from the Creator and Governor and Benefactor of the world, that most free and sovereign Agent, all the glory of this sort of freedom? Does it not

* Dr. Gill, in his Answer to Dr. Whitby, vol. III. p. 183, &c.

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seem to make him a kind of mechanical medium of fate, and introduce Mr. Hobbes' doctrine of fatality and necessity, into all things that God hath to do with? Does it not seem to represent the blessed God, as a Being of vast understanding, as well as power and efficiency, but still to leave him without a Will to choose among all the objects within his view? In short, it seems to make the blessed God a sort of Almighty Minister of Fate, under its universal and supreme influence; as it was the professed sentiment of some of the ancients, that fate was above the gods."

This is declaiming, rather than arguing; and an application to men's imaginations and prejudices, rather than to mere reason. But I would calmly endeavor to consider, whether there be any reason in this frightful representation. But before I enter upon a particular consideration of the matter, I would observe this; that it is reasonable to suppose, it should be much more difficult to express or conceive things according to exact metaphysical truth, relating to the nature and manner of the existence of things in the Divine Understanding and Will, and the operation of these faculties (if I may so call them) of the Divine Mind, than in the human mind; which is infinitely more within our view, and nearer to a proportion to the measure of our comprehension, and more commensurate to the use and import of human speech. Language is indeed very deficient, in regard of terms, to express precise truth concerning our own minds, and their faculties and operations. Words were first formed to express external things; and those that are applied to express things internal and spiritual, are almost all borrowed, and used in a sort of figurative sense. Whence they are, most of them, attended with a great deal of ambiguity and unfixedness in their signification, occasioning innumerable doubts, difficulties and confusions, in inquiries and controversies, about things of this nature. But language is much less adapted to express things in the mind of the incomprehensible Deity, precisely as they are.

We find a great deal of difficulty in conceiving exactly of the nature of our own souls. And notwithstanding all the

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progress which has been made, in past and present ages, in this kind of knowledge, whereby our metaphysics, as it relates to these things, is brought to greater perfection than once it was; yet, here is still work enough left for future inquiries and researches, and room for progress still to be made, for many ages and generations. But we had need to be infinitely able metaphysicians, to conceive with clearness, according to strict, proper and perfect truth, concerning the nature of the Divine Essence, and the modes of the action and operation of the powers of the Divine Mind.

And it may be noted particularly, that though we are obliged to conceive of some things in God as consequent and dependent on others, and of some things pertaining to the Divine Nature and Will as the foundation of others, and so before others in the order of nature; as, we must conceive of the knowledge and holiness of God as prior, in the order of nature, to his happiness; the perfection of his understanding, as the foundation of his wise purposes and decrees; the holiness of his nature, as the cause and reason of his holy determinations. And yet, when we speak of cause and effect, antecedent and consequent, fundamental and dependent, determining and determined, in the first Being, who is selfexistent, independent, of perfect and absolute simplicity and immutability, and the first cause of all things; doubtless there must be less propriety in such representations, than when we speak of derived dependent beings, who are compounded, and liable to perpetual mutation and succession.

Having premised this, I proceed to observe concerning the forementioned author's exclamation, about the necessary determination of God's Will, in all things, by what he sees to be fittest and best.

That all the seeming force of such objections and exclamations must arise from an imagination, that there is some sort of privilege or dignity in being without such a moral necessity, as will make it impossible to do any other, than always choose what is wisest and best; as though there were some disadvantage, meanness and subjection, in such a necessity; a thing by which the Will was confined, kept under,

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and held in servitude by something, which, as it were, maintained a strong and invincible power and dominion over it, by bonds that held God fast, and that he could, by no means, deliver himself from. Whereas, this must be all mere imagination and delusion. It is no disadvantage or dishonor to a being, necessarily to act in the most excellent and happy manner, from the necessary perfection of his own nature. This argues no imperfection, inferiority or dependence, nor any want of dignity, privilege or ascendency.* It is not in-

* "It might have been objected, with more plausibleness, that the Supreme Cause cannot be free, because he must needs do always what is best in the whole. But this would not at all serve Spinoza's purpose; for this is a necessity, not of nature and of fate, but of fitness and wisdom; a necessity consistent with the greatest freedom, and most perfect choice. For the only foundation of this necessity is such an unalterable rectitude of Will, and perfection of wisdom, as makes it impossible for a wise Being to act foolishly." *Clark's Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God.* Edit. 6, p. 64.

"Though God is a most perfect free agent, yet he cannot but do what is best and wisest on the whole. The reason is evident; because perfect wisdom and goodness are as steady and certain principles of action, as necessity itself; and an infinitely wise and good Being, indued with the most perfect liberty, can no more choose to act in contradiction to wisdom and goodness, than a necessary agent can act contrary to the necessity by which it is acted; it being as great an absurdity and impossibility in choice, for Infinite Wisdom to choose to act unwisely, or Infinite Goodness to choose what is not good, as it would be in nature, for absolute necessity to fail of producing its necessary effect. There was, indeed, no necessity in nature, that God should at first create such beings as he has created, or indeed any being at all, because he is, in Himself, infinitely happy and allsufficient. There was also, no necessity in nature, that he should preserve and continue things in being, after they were created; because he would be selfsufficient without their continuance, as he was before their creation. But it was fit, and wise, and good, that Infinite Wisdom should manifest, and Infinite Goodness communicate itself; and therefore it was necessary, in the sense of necessity I am now speaking of, that things should be made at such a time, and continued so long, and indeed with various perfections in such degrees, as Infinite Wisdom and Goodness saw it best and wisest that they should." *Ibid* p. 112, 113.

"'Tis not a fault, but a perfection of our nature, to desire, will, and act, according to the last result of a fair examination. This is so far from being a restraint or diminution of freedom, that it is the very improvement and benefit of it. 'Tis not an abridgement, 'tis the end and use of our liberty; and

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consistent with the absolute and most perfect sovereignty of God. The sovereignty of God is his ability and authority to do whatever pleases him; whereby *He doth according to his Will in the armies of Heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what dost*

the further we are removed from such a determination, the nearer we are to misery and slavery. A perfect indifference in the mind, not determinable by its last judgment, of the good or evil that is thought to attend its choice, would be so far from being an advantage and excellency of any intellectual nature, that it would be as great an imperfection, as the want of indifferency to act, or not to act, till determined by the Will, would be an imperfection on the other side. 'Tis as much a perfection, that desire, or the power of preferring should be determined by good, as that the power of acting should be determined by the Will; and the more certain such determination is, the greater the perfection. Nay, were we determined by any thing but the last result of our own minds, judging of the good or evil of any action, we were not free. The very end of our freedom being that we might attain the good we choose; and, therefore, every man is brought under a necessity by his constitution, as an intelligent being, to be determined in willing by his own thought and judgment, what is best for him to do; else he would be under the determination of some other than himself, which is want of liberty. And to deny that a man's Will, in every determination, follows his own judgment, is to say, that a man wills and acts for an end that he would not have, at the same time that he wills and acts for it. For if he prefers it in his present thoughts, before any other, it is plain he then thinks better of it, and would have it before any other, unless he can have, and not have it, will, and not will it, at the same time; a contradiction too manifest to be admitted. If we look upon those superior beings above us, who enjoy perfect happiness, we shall have reason to judge, that they are more steadily determined in their choice of good than we; and yet we have no reason to think they are less happy, or less free, than we are. And if it were fit for such poor finite creatures as we are, to pronounce what Infinite Wisdom and Goodness could do, I think we might say, that God himself cannot choose what is not good. The freedom of the Almighty hinders not his being determined by what is best. But to give a right view of this mistaken part of liberty, let me ask, Would any one be a changeling, because he is less determined by wise determination, than a wise man? Is it worth the name of freedom, to be at liberty to play the fool, and draw shame and misery upon a man's self? If to break loose from the conduct of reason, and to want that restraint of examination and judgment, that keeps us from doing or choosing the worse, be liberty, true liberty, madmen and fools are the only free men. Yet I think, no-

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thou ?....The following things belong to the *sovereignty* of God, viz. 1. Supreme, universal, and infinite *Power*, whereby he is able to do what he pleases, without control, without any confinement of that power, without any subjection, in the least measure, to any other power; and so without any hinderance or restraint, that it should be either impossible, or at all difficult, for him to accomplish his Will; and without any dependence of his power on any other power, from whence it should be derived, or which it should stand in any need of: So far from this, that all other power is derived from him, and is absolutely dependent on him. 2. That He has supreme *authority*, absolute and most perfect right to do what he wills, without

body would choose to be mad, for the sake of such liberty, but he that is mad already." *Locke, Hum. Und.* Vol. I. Edit. 7, p. 215, 216.

"This Being, having all things always necessarily in view, must always, and eternally will, according to his infinite comprehension of things; that is, must will all things that are wisest and best to be done. There is no getting free of this consequence. If it can will at all, it must will this way. To be capable of knowing, and not capable of willing, is not to be understood. And to be capable of willing otherwise than what is wisest and best, contradicts that knowledge which is infinite. Infinite knowledge must direct the Will without error. Here then, is the origin of moral necessity; and that is really, of freedom. Perhaps it may be said, when the Divine Will is determined, from the consideration of the eternal aptitudes of things, it is as necessarily determined, as if it were physically impelled, if that were possible. But it is unskilfulness, to suppose this an objection. The great principle is once established, viz. That the Divine Will is determined by the eternal reason and aptitudes of things, instead of being physically impelled; and after that, the more strong and necessary this determination is, the more perfect the Deity must be allowed to be. It is this that makes him an amiable and adorable Being, whose Will and power are constantly, immutably, determined, by the consideration of what is wisest and best; instead of a surd Being, with power, but without discerning and reason. It is the beauty of this necessity, that it is strong as fate itself, with all the advantage of reason and goodness. It is strange, to see men contend, that the Deity is not free, because he is necessarily rational, immutably good and wise; when a man is allowed still the perfecter being, the more fixedly and constantly his Will is determined by reason and truth." *Inquiry into the Nature of the Hum. Soul*, Edit. 3, vol. II. p. 403, 404.

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subjection to any superior authority, or any derivation of authority from any other, or limitation by any distinct independent authority, either superior, equal, or inferior; he being the head of all dominion, and fountain of all authority; and also without restraint by any obligation, implying either subjection, derivation, or dependence, or proper limitation. 3. That his *Will* is supreme, underived, and independent on any thing without Himself; being in every thing determined by his own counsel, having no other rule but his own wisdom; his Will not being subject to, or restrained by the Will of any other, and other Wills being perfectly subject to his. 4. That his *Wisdom*, which determines his Will, is supreme, perfect, underived, selfsufficient and independent; so that it may be said, as in Isa. xl. 14. *With whom took He counsel? And who instructed Him and taught Him in the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and shewed Him the way of understanding?*...There is no other Divine Sovereignty but this, and this is properly *absolute sovereignty*; no other is desirable, nor would any other be honorable, or happy, and indeed, there is no other conceivable or possible. It is the glory and greatness of the Divine Sovereignty, that God's Will is determined by his own infinite allsufficient wisdom in every thing; and in nothing is either directed by any inferior wisdom, or by no wisdom; whereby it would become senseless arbitrariness, determining and acting without reason, design or end.

If God's Will is steadily and surely determined in every thing by supreme wisdom, then it is in every thing necessarily determined to that which is most wise. And, certainly, it would be a disadvantage and indignity to be otherwise. For if the Divine Will was not necessarily determined to that, which in every case is wisest and best, it must be subject to some degree of undesigning contingence; and so in the same degree liable to evil. To suppose the Divine Will liable to be carried hither and thither at random, by the uncertain wind of blind contingence, which is guided by no wisdom, no motive, no intelligent dictate whatsoever, (if any such thing were possible) would certainly argue a great degree of im-

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perfection and meanness, infinitely unworthy of the Deity. If it be a disadvantage for the Divine Will to be attended with this moral necessity, then the more free from it, and the more left at random, the greater dignity and advantage. And, consequently to be perfectly free from the direction of understanding, and universally and entirely left to senseless, unmeaning contingence, to act absolutely at random, would be the supreme glory.

It no more argues any dependence of God's Will, that his supremely wise volition is necessary, than it argues a dependence of his being, that his existence is necessary. If it be something too low, for the Supreme Being to have his Will determined by moral Necessity, so as necessarily, in every case, to will in the highest degree holily and happily; then why is it not also something too low, for him to have his existence, and the infinite perfection of his nature, and his infinite happiness determined by necessity? It is no more to God's dishonor, to be necessarily wise, than to be necessarily holy. And if neither of them be to his dishonor, then it is not to his dishonor necessarily to act holily and wisely. And if it be not dishonorable to be necessarily holy and wise, in the highest possible degree, no more is it mean and dishonorable, necessarily to act holily and wisely in the highest possible degree; or, which is the same thing, to do that, in every case, which, above all other things, is wisest and best.

The reason, why it is not dishonorable to be necessarily most holy, is, because holiness in itself is an excellent and honorable thing. For the same reason, it is no dishonor to be necessarily most wise, and, in every case, to act most wisely, or do the thing which is the wisest of all; for wisdom is also in itself excellent and honorable.

The forementioned author of the *Essay on the Freedom of Will*, &c. as has been observed, represents that doctrine of the Divine Will's being in every thing necessarily determined by superior fitness, as making the blessed God a kind of Almighty Minister and mechanical medium of fate; and he insists, page 93, 94, that this moral necessity and impossibility is, in effect, the same thing with physical and natural ne-

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cessity and impossibility: And in p. 54, 55, he says, "The scheme which determines the Will always and certainly by the understanding, and the understanding by the appearance of things, seems to take away the true nature of vice and virtue. For the sublimest of virtues, and the vilest of vices, seem rather to be matters of fate and necessity, flowing naturally and necessarily from the existence, the circumstances, and present situation of persons and things; for this existence and situation necessarily makes such an appearance to the mind; from this appearance flows a necessary perception and judgment, concerning these things; this judgment, necessarily determines the Will; and thus, by this chain of necessary causes, virtue and vice would lose their nature, and become natural ideas, and necessary things, instead of moral and free actions."

And yet this same author allows, p. 30, 31, That a perfectly wise being will constantly and certainly choose what is most fit; and says, p. 102, 103, "I grant, and always have granted, that wheresoever there is such antecedent superior fitness of things, God acts according to it, so as never to contradict it; and, particularly in all his judicial proceedings as a Governor, and distributer of rewards and punishments." Yea, he says expressly, p. 43, "That it is not possible for God to act otherwise, than according to this fitness and goodness in things."

So that according to this author, putting these several passages of his Essay together, there is no virtue, nor any thing of a moral nature, in the most sublime and glorious acts and exercises of God's holiness, justice, and faithfulness; and he never does any thing which is in itself supremely worthy, and, above all other things, fit and excellent, but only as a kind of mechanical medium of fate; and in what he does as the Judge and moral Governor of the world, he exercises no moral excellency; exercising no freedom in these things, because he acts by moral necessity, which is, in effect, the same with physical or natural necessity; and, therefore, he only acts by an *Hobbistical* fatality; *as a Being indeed of vast understanding, as well as power and efficiency* (as he said before) *but without a*

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Will to choose, being a kind of Almighty Minister of fate, acting under its supreme influence. For he allows, that in all these things, God's Will is determined constantly and certainly by a superior fitness, and that it is not possible for him to act otherwise. And if these things are so, what glory or praise belongs to God for doing holily and justly, or taking the most fit, holy, wise and excellent course, in any one instance? Whereas, according to the scriptures, and also the common sense of mankind, it does not, in the least, derogate from the honor of any being, that through the moral perfection of his nature, he necessarily acts with supreme wisdom and holiness; but on the contrary, his praise is the greater; herein consists the height of his glory.

The same author, p. 56, supposes, that herein appears the excellent *character of a wise and good man, that though he can choose contrary to the fitness of things, yet he does not; but suffers himself to be directed by fitness;* and that, in this conduct, *he imitates the blessed God.* And yet, he supposes it is contrariwise with the blessed God; not that he suffers himself to be directed by fitness, when *he can choose contrary to the fitness of things,* but that *he cannot choose contrary to the fitness of things;* as he says, p. 42....*That it is not possible for God to act otherwise than according to this fitness, where there is any fitness or goodness in things:* Yea, he supposes, p. 31, That if a man *were perfectly wise and good, he could not do otherwise, than be constantly and certainly determined by the fitness of things.*

One thing more I would observe, before I conclude this section; and that is, that if it derogates nothing from the glory of God, to be necessarily determined by superior fitness in some things, then neither does it to be thus determined in all things; from any thing in the nature of such necessity, as at all detracting from God's freedom, independence, absolute supremacy, or any dignity or glory of his nature, state or manner of acting; or as implying any infirmity, restraint, or subjection. And if the thing be such as well consists with God's glory, and has nothing tending to detract from it; then

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we need not be afraid of ascribing it to God in too many things, lest thereby we should detract from God's glory too much.

SECTION VIII.

Some further Objections against the moral Necessity of God's Volitions *considered.*

THE author last cited, as has been observed, owns that God, being perfectly wise, will constantly and certainly choose what appears most fit, where there is a superior fitness and goodness in things; and that it is not possible for him to do otherwise. So that it is in effect confessed, that in those things where there is any real preferableness, it is no dishonor, nothing in any respect unworthy of God, for him to act from necessity; notwithstanding all that can be objected from the agreement of such a necessity, with the fate of the *Stoics*, and the necessity, maintained by Mr. Hobbes. From which it will follow, that if it were so, that in all the different things, among which God chooses, there were evermore a superior fitness, or preferableness on one side, then it would be no dishonor, or any thing, in any respect, unworthy, or unbecoming of God, for his Will to be necessarily determined in every thing. And if this be allowed, it is a giving up entirely the argument, from the unsuitableness of such a necessity to the liberty, supremacy, independence and glory of the Divine Being; and a resting the whole weight of the affair on the decision of another point wholly diverse; viz. Whether it be so indeed, that in all the various possible things, which are in God's view, and may be considered as capable objects of his choice, there is not evermore a preferableness in one thing above another. This is denied by this author; who supposes, that in many instances, between two or more possible things,

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which come within the view of the divine mind, there is a perfect indifference and equality, as to fitness or tendency to attain any good end which God can have in view, or to answer any of his designs. Now, therefore, I would consider whether this be evident.

The arguments brought to prove this, are of two kinds. (1.) It is urged, that in many instances, we must suppose there is absolutely no difference between various possible objects of choice, which God has in view: And (2.) that the difference between many things is so inconsiderable, or of such a nature, that it would be unreasonable to suppose it to be of any consequence; or to suppose that any of God's wise designs would not be answered in one way as well as the other.

Therefore,

I. The first thing to be considered is whether there are any instances wherein there is a perfect likeness, and absolutely no difference, between different objects of choice, that are proposed to the Divine Understanding?

And here, in the first place, it may be worthy to be considered, whether the contradiction there is in the terms of the question proposed, does not give reason to suspect, that there is an inconsistence in the thing supposed. It is enquired, whether different objects of choice may not be absolutely without difference? If they are absolutely without difference, then how are they different objects of choice? If there be absolutely no difference in any respect, then there is no variety or distinction; for distinction is only by some difference. And if there be no variety among proposed objects of choice, then there is no opportunity for variety of choice, or difference of determination. For that determination of a thing, which is not different in any respect, is not a different determination, but the same. That this is no quibble, may appear more fully thus:

The arguments to prove that the Most High, in some instances, chooses to do one thing rather than another, where the things themselves are perfectly without difference, are two.

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1. That the various parts of infinite time and space, absolutely considered, are perfectly alike, and do not differ at all one from another; and that therefore, when God determined to create the world in such a part of infinite duration and space, rather than others, he determined and preferred, among various objects, between which there was no preferableness, and absolutely no difference.

Answ. This objection supposes an infinite length of time before the world was created, distinguished by successive parts, properly and truly so; or a succession of limited and unmeasurable periods of time, following one another, in an infinitely long series; which must needs be a groundless imagination. The eternal duration which was before the world, being only the eternity of God's existence; which is nothing else but his immediate, perfect and invariable possession of the whole of his unlimited life, together and at once: *Vita interminabilis, tota, simul et perfecta possessio.* Which is so generally allowed, that I need not stand to demonstrate it.*

* "If all created beings were taken away, all possibility of any mutation or succession, of one thing to another, would appear to be also removed. Abstract succession in eternity is scarce to be understood. What is it that succeeds? One minute to another, perhaps, *velut unda supervenit undam.* But when we imagine this, we fancy that the minutes are things separately existing. This is the common notion; and yet it is a manifest prejudice. Time is nothing but the existence of created successive beings, and eternity the necessary existence of the Deity. Therefore, if this necessary being hath no change or succession in his nature, his existence must of course be unsuccessive. We seem to commit a double oversight in this case; first, we find succession in the necessary nature and existence of the Deity himself; which is wrong, if the reasoning above be conclusive. And then we ascribe this succession to eternity, considered abstractedly from the Eternal Being; and suppose it, one knows not what, a thing subsisting by itself, and flowing one minute after another. This is the work of pure imagination, and contrary to the reality of things. Hence the common metaphorical expressions: *Time runs apace, let us lay hold on the present minute*, and the like. The philosophers themselves mislead us by their illustrations. They compare eternity to the motion of a point running on forever, and making a traceless infinite line. Here the point is supposed a thing actually subsisting, representing the present minute; and then they ascribe motion or succession to it; that is, they ascribe motion to a mere nonentity, to illustrate to us a successive eternity, made up

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So this objection supposes an extent of space beyond the limits of the creation, of an infinite length, breadth and depth, truly and properly distinguished into different measurable parts, limited at certain stages, one beyond another, in an infinite series. Which notion of absolute and infinite space is doubtless as unreasonable, as that now mentioned, of absolute and infinite duration. It is as improper to imagine that the immensity and omnipresence of God is distinguished by a series of miles and leagues, one beyond another; as that the infinite duration of God is distinguished by months and years, one after another. A diversity and order of distinct parts, limited by certain periods, is as conceivable, and does as naturally obtrude itself on our imagination, in one case as the other; and there is equal reason in each case, to suppose that our imagination deceives us. It is equally improper to talk of months and years of the Divine Existence, and miles squares of Deity; and we equally deceive ourselves, when we talk of the world's being differently fixed with respect to either of these sorts of measures. I think we know not what we mean, if we say, the world might have been differently placed from what it is, in the broad expanse of infinity; or, that it might have been differently fixed in the long line of eternity; and all arguments and objections, which are built on the imaginations we are apt to have of infinite extension or duration, are buildings founded on shadows, or castles in the air.

2. The second argument, to prove that the Most High wills one thing rather than another, without any superior fitness or preferableness in the thing preferred, is God's actually placing in different parts of the world, particles, or atoms of matter, that are perfectly equal and alike. The forementioned author says, p. 78, &c. "If one would descend to the

of distinct successive parts. If once we allow an all perfect mind, which hath an actual, immutable and infinite comprehension of all things, always (and allow it we must) the distinction of past and future vanishes with respect to such a mind.... In a word, if we proceed step by step, as above, the eternity or existence of the Deity will appear to be *Vitæ interminabilis, totæ, simul & perfectæ possessio*; how much soever this may have been a paradox hitherto." *Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul.* Vol. II. p. 409, 410, 411. Edit. III.

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minute specific particles, of which different bodies are composed, we should see abundant reason to believe, that there are thousands of such little particles, or atoms of matter, which are perfectly equal and alike, and could give no distinct determination to the Will of God, where to place them." He there instances in particles of water, of which there are such immense numbers, which compose the rivers and oceans of this world; and the infinite myriads of the luminous and fiery particles, which compose the body of the sun; so many, that it would be very unreasonable to suppose no two of them should be exactly equal and alike.

Answ. (1.) To this I answer: That as we must suppose matter to be infinitely divisible, it is very unlikely, that any two, of all these particles, are exactly equal and alike; so unlikely, that it is a thousand to one, yea, an infinite number to one, but it is otherwise; and that although we should allow a great similarity between the different particles of water and fire, as to their general nature and figure; and however small we suppose those particles to be, it is infinitely unlikely, that any two of them should be exactly equal in dimensions and quantity of matter. If we should suppose a great many globes of the same nature with the globe of the earth, it would be very strange, if there were any two of them that had exactly the same number of particles of dust and water in them. But infinitely less strange, than that two particles of light should have just the same quantity of matter. For a particle of light, according to the doctrine of the infinite divisibility of matter, is composed of infinitely more assignable parts, than there are particles of dust and water in the globe of the earth. And as it is infinitely unlikely, that any two of these particles should be equal; so it is, that they should be alike in other respects; to instance in the configuration of their surfaces. If there were very many globes, of the nature of the earth, it would be very unlikely that any two should have exactly the same number of particles of dust, water and stone, in their surfaces, and all posited exactly alike, one with respect to another, without any difference in any part discernible either by the naked eye or microscope; but infinitely less strange,

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than that two particles of light should be perfectly of the same figure. For there are infinitely more unequal and unlike parts on the surface of a particle of light than there are particles of dust, water and stone, on the surface of the whole globe.

Answ. (2.) But then, supposing that there are two particles, or atoms of matter, perfectly equal and alike, which God has placed in different parts of the creation; as I will not deny it to be possible for God to make two bodies perfectly alike, and put them in different places; yet it will not follow, that two different or distinct acts or effects of the Divine Power have exactly the same fitness for the same ends. For these two different bodies are not different or distinct in any other respects than those wherein they differ. They are two in no other respects than those wherein there is a difference. If they are perfectly equal and alike in themselves, then they can be distinguished, or be distinct, only in those things which are called circumstances; as place, time, rest, motion, or some other present or past circumstances or relations. That is it is difference only that constitutes distinction. If God makes two bodies, in themselves every way equal and alike, and agreeing perfectly in all other circumstances and relations, but only their place, then in this only is there any distinction or duplicity. The figure is the same, the measure is the same, the solidity and resistance are the same, and every thing the same, but only the place. Therefore what the Will of God determines, is this, namely, that there should be the same figure, the same extension, the same resistance, &c. and in different places. And for this determination he has some reason. There is some end, for which such a determination and act has a peculiar fitness, above all other acts. Here is no one thing determined without an end, and no one thing without a fitness for that end, superior to anything else. If it be the pleasure of God to cause the same resistance, and the same figure, to be in two different places and situations, we can no more justly argue from it, that here must be some determination or act of God's Will, thereby wholly without motive or end, than we can argue, that whenever, in any case it is a man's Will to speak the same words, or make the same

stands at two different times; there must be some determination or act of his Will, without any motive or end. The difference of place, in the former case, proves no more than the difference of time does in the other. If any one should say, with regard to the former case, that there must be something determined without an end, viz. that of those two similar bodies, this in particular should be made in this place, and the other in the other, and should inquire, why the Creator did not make them in a transposition, when both are alike, and each would equally have suited either place? The inquiry supposes something that is not true, namely, that the two bodies differ and are distinct in other respects, besides their place. So that with this distinction inherent in them, they might, in their first creation, have been transposed, and each might have begun its existence in the place of the other.

Let us, for clearness sake, suppose, that God hath, at the beginning, made two globes, each of an inch diameter, both perfect spheres, and perfectly solid, without pores, and perfectly alike in every respect, and placed them near one to another, one towards the right hand, and the other towards the left, without any difference as to time, motion or rest, past or present, or any circumstance, but only their place; and the question should be asked, why God in their creation placed them so: Why that which is made on the right hand, was not made on the left, and *vice versâ*? Let it be well considered, whether there be any sense in such a question; and whether the inquiry does not suppose something false and absurd. Let it be considered, what the Creator must have done otherwise than he did, what different act of Will or power he must have exerted, in order to the thing proposed. All that could have been done, would have been to have made two spheres, perfectly alike, in the same place where he has made them, without any difference of the things made, either in themselves or in any circumstance; so that the whole effect would have been without any difference, and therefore, just the same. By the supposition, the two spheres are different in no other respect but their place; and there-

fore in other respects they are the same. Each has the same roundness; it is not a distinct rotundity, in any other respect but its situation. There are also the same dimensions, differing in nothing but their place. And so of their resistance, and every thing else that belongs to them.

Here, if any chooses to say, "that there is a difference in another respect, viz. that they are not NUMERICALLY the same; that it is thus with all the qualities that belong to them; that it is confessed they are, in some respects, the same; that is, they are both exactly alike; but yet numerically they differ. Thus the roundness of one is not the same numerical individual roundness with that of the other." Let this be supposed; then the question about the determination of the Divine Will in the affair, is, why did God will, that this individual roundness should be at the right hand, and the other individual roundness at the left? Why did he not make them in a contrary position? Let any rational person consider, whether such questions be not words without a meaning, as much as if God should see fit for some ends, to cause the same sounds to be repeated, or made at two different times; the sounds being perfectly the same in every other respect, but only one was a minute after the other; and it should be asked upon it, why did God cause these sounds, numerically different, to succeed one the other in such a manner? Why did he not make that individual sound, which was in the first minute, to be in the second? And the individual sound of the last minute to be in the first? These inquiries would be even ridiculous; as, I think, every person must see, at once, in the case proposed of two sounds, being only the same repeated, absolutely without any difference, but that one circumstance of time. If the Most High sees it will answer some good end, that the same sound should be made by lightning at two distinct times, and therefore wills that it should be so, must it needs therefore be, that herein there is some act of God's Will without any motive or end? God saw fit often, at distinct times, and on different occasions, to say the very same words to Moses, namely, these, *I am Jehovah*. And would it not be unreasonable to infer, as a certain conse-

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quence, from this, that here must be some act or acts of the Divine Will, in determining and disposing these words exactly alike, at different times, wholly without aim or inducement? But it would be no more unreasonable than to say, that there must be an act of God's without any inducement, if he sees it best, and, for some reasons, determines that there shall be the same resistance, the same dimensions, and the same figure, in several distinct places.

If in the instance of the two spheres perfectly alike, it be supposed possible that God might have made them in a contrary position; that which is made at the right hand, being made at the left; then I ask, Whether it is not evidently equally possible, if God had made but one of them, and that in the place of the right hand globe, that he might have made that numerically different from what it is, and numerically different from what he did make it, though perfectly alike, and in the same place; and at the same time, and in every respect, in the same circumstances and relations? Namely, Whether he might not have made it numerically the same with that which he has now made at the left hand, and so have left that which is now created at the right hand, in a state of nonexistence? And, if so, whether it would not have been possible to have made one in that place, perfectly like these, and yet numerically differing from both? And let it be considered, whether, from this notion of a numerical difference in bodies, perfectly equal and alike, which numerical difference is something inherent in the bodies themselves, and diverse from the difference of place or time, or any circumstance whatsoever; it will not follow, that there is an infinite number of numerically different possible bodies, perfectly alike, among which God chooses, by a selfdetermining power, when he goes about to create bodies.

Therefore let us put the case thus; Supposing that God, in the beginning, had created but one perfectly solid sphere, in a certain place; and it should be inquired, Why God created that individual sphere, in that place, at that time? And why he did not create another sphere perfectly like it, but numerically different, in the same place, at the same time?

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Or why he chose to bring into being there, that very body, rather than any of the infinite number of other bodies, perfectly like it; either of which he could have made there as well, and would have answered his end as well? Why he caused to exist, at that place and time, that individual roundness, rather than any other of the infinite number of individual rotundities just like it? Why that individual resistance, rather than any other of the infinite number of possible resistances just like it? And it might as reasonably be asked, Why, when God first caused it to thunder, he caused that individual sound then to be made, and not another just like it? Why did he make choice of this very sound, and reject all the infinite number of other possible sounds just like it, but numerically differing from it, and all differing one from another? I think, every body must be sensible of the absurdity and nonsense of what is supposed in such inquiries. And, if we calmly attend to the matter, we shall be convinced, that all such kind of objections as I am answering, are founded on nothing but the imperfection of our manner of conceiving things, and the obscureness of language, and great want of clearness and precision in the signification of terms.

If any shall find fault with this reasoning, that it is going a great length in metaphysical niceties and subtilties; I answer, the objection which they are in reply to, is a metaphysical subtilty, and must be treated according to the nature of it.*

II. Another thing alleged is, that innumerable things which are determined by the Divine Will, and chosen and done by God rather than others, differ from those that are not chosen in so inconsiderable a manner, that it would be unreasonable to suppose the difference to be of any consequence, or that there is any superior fitness or goodness, that God can have respect to in the determination.

* "For men to have recourse to subtilties, in raising difficulties, and then complain, that they should be taken off by minutely examining these subtilties, is a strange kind of procedure." *Nature of the Human Soul*, Vol. 2, page 231.

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To which I answer; It is impossible for us to determine, with any certainty or evidence, that because the difference is very small, and appears to us of no consideration, therefore there is absolutely no superior goodness, and no valuable end, which can be proposed by the Creator and Governor of the world, in ordering such a difference. The forementioned author mentions many instances. One is, there being one atom in the whole universe more or less. But I think, it would be unreasonable to suppose, that God made one atom in vain, or without any end or motive. He made not one atom, but what was a work of his Almighty power, as much as the whole globe of the earth, and requires as much of a constant exertion of Almighty power to uphold it; and was made and is upheld understandingly, and on design, as much as if no other had been made but that. And it would be as unreasonable to suppose, that he made it without any thing really aimed at in so doing, as much as to suppose, that he made the planet Jupiter without aim or design.

It is possible, that the most minute effects of the Creator's power, the smallest assignable difference between the things which God has made, may be attended, in the whole series of events, and the whole compass and extent of their influence, with very great and important consequences. If the laws of motion and gravitation, laid down by Sir Isaac Newton, hold universally, there is not one atom, nor the least assignable part of an atom, but what has influence, every moment, throughout the whole material universe, to cause every part to be otherwise than it would be, if it were not for that particular corporeal existence. And however the effect is insensible for the present, yet it may, in length of time, become great and important.

To illustrate this, let us suppose two bodies moving the same way, in straight lines, perfectly parallel one to another; but to be diverted from this parallel course, and drawn one from another, as much as might be by the attraction of an atom, at the distance of one of the furthest of the fixed stars from the earth; these bodies being turned out of the lines of

their parallel motion, will, by degrees, get further and further distant, one from the other; and though the distance may be imperceptible for a long time, yet at length it may become very great. So the revolution of a planet round the sun being retarded or accelerated, and the orbit of its revolution made greater or less, and more or less eliptical, and so its periodical time longer or shorter, no more than may be by the influence of the least atom, might, in length of time, perform a whole revolution sooner or later than otherwise it would have done; which might make a vast alteration with regard to millions of important events. So the influence of the least particle may, for aught we know, have such effect on something in the constitution of some human body, as to cause another thought to arise in the mind at a certain time, than otherwise would have been; which, in length of time, (yea, and that not very great) might occasion a vast alteration through the whole world of mankind. And so innumerable other ways might be mentioned, wherein the least assignable alteration may possibly be attended with great consequences.

Another argument, which the forementioned author brings against a necessary determination of the Divine Will, by a superior fitness, is, that such doctrine derogates from the freeness of God's grace and goodness, in choosing the objects of his favor and bounty, and from the obligation upon men to thankfulness for special benefits. Page 89, &c.

In answer to this objection, I would observe,

1. That it derogates no more from the goodness of God, to suppose the exercise of the benevolence of his nature to be determined by wisdom, than to suppose it determined by chance, and that his favors are bestowed altogether at random, his Will being determined by nothing but perfect accident, without any end or design whatsoever; which must be the case, as has been demonstrated, if volition be not determined by a prevailing motive. That which is owing to perfect contingence, wherein neither previous inducement, nor antecedent choice has any hand, is not owing more to goodness or benevolence, than that which is owing to the influence of a wise end.

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2. It is acknowledged, that if the motive that determines the Will of God, in the choice of the objects of his favors, be any moral quality in the object, recommending that object to his benevolence above others, his choosing that object is not so great a manifestation of the freeness and sovereignty of his grace, as if it were otherwise. But there is no necessity of supposing this, in order to our supposing that he has some wise end in view, in determining to bestow his favors on one person rather than another. We are to distinguish between the merit of the object of God's favor, or a moral qualification of the object attracting that favor and recommending to it, and the natural fitness of such a determination of the act of God's goodness, to answer some wise designs of his own, some end in the view of God's omniscience. It is God's own act, that is the proper and immediate object of his volition.

3. I suppose that none will deny, but that, in some instances, God acts from wise designs in determining the particular subjects of his favors. None will say, I presume, that when God distinguishes, by his bounty, particular societies or persons, He never, in any instance, exercises any wisdom in so doing, aiming at some happy consequence. And, if it be not denied to be so in some instances, then I would inquire, whether, in these instances, God's goodness is less manifested, than in those wherein God has no aim or end at all? And whether the subjects have less cause of thankfulness? And if so, who shall be thankful for the bestowment of distinguishing mercy, with that enhancing circumstance of the distinction's being made without an end? How shall it be known when God is influenced by some wise aim, and when not? It is very manifest, with respect to the Apostle Paul, that God had wise ends in choosing him to be a Christian and an Apostle, who had been a persecutor, &c. The Apostle himself mentions one end. 1 Tim. i. 15, 16. *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on Him to life everlast-*

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ing. But yet the Apostle never looked on it as a diminution of the freedom and riches of Divine Grace in his election, which he so often and so greatly magnifies. This brings me to observe,

4. Our supposing such a moral necessity in the acts of God's Will, as has been spoken of, is so far from necessarily derogating from the riches of God's grace to such as are the chosen objects of his favor, that, in many instances, this moral necessity may arise from goodness, and from the great degree of it. God may choose this object rather than another, as having a superior fitness to answer the ends, designs and inclinations of his goodness; being more sinful, and so more miserable and necessitous than others; the inclinations of Infinite Mercy and Benevolence may be more gratified, and the gracious design of God's sending his Son into the world, may be more abundantly answered, in the exercises of mercy towards such an object, rather than another.

One thing more I would observe, before I finish what I have to say on the head of the necessity of the acts of God's Will; and that is, that something much more like a servile subjection of the Divine Being to fatal necessity, will follow from Arminian principles, than from the doctrines which they oppose. For they (at least most of them) suppose, with respect to all events that happen in the moral world, depending on the volitions of moral agents, which are the most important events of the universe, to which all others are subordinate; I say, they suppose, with respect to these, that God has a certain foreknowledge of them, antecedent to any purposes or decrees of his, about them. And if so, they have a fixed certain futurity, prior to any designs or volitions of his, and independent on them, and to which his volitions must be subject, as he would wisely accommodate his affairs to this fixed futurity of the state of things in the moral world. So that here, instead of a moral necessity of God's Will, arising from, or consisting in, the infinite perfection and blessedness of the Divine Being, we have a fixed unalterable state of things, properly distinct from the perfect nature of the Divine Mind, and the state of the Divine Will and Design, and entirely in-

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dependent on these things, and which they have no hand in, because they are prior to them; and which God's Will is truly subject to, he being obliged to conform or accommodate himself to it, in all his purposes and decrees, and in every thing he does in his disposals and government of the world; the moral world being the end of the natural; so that all is in vain, that is not accommodated to that state of the moral world which consists in, or depends upon, the acts and state of the wills of moral agents, which had a fixed futuritien from eternity. Such a subjection to necessity as this, would truly argue an inferiority and servitude, that would be unworthy the Supreme Being; and is much more agreeable to the notion which many of the heathen had of fate, as above the gods, than that moral necessity of fitness and wisdom which has been spoken of; and is truly repugnant to the absolute sovereignty of God, and inconsistent with the supremacy of his Will; and really subjects the Will of the Most High, to the Will of his creatures, and brings him into dependence upon them.

SECTION IX.

Concerning that Objection against the Doctrine which has been maintained, that it makes God *the* Author of Sin.

IT is urged by *Arminians*, that the doctrine of the necessity of men's volitions, or their necessary connexion with antecedent events and circumstances, makes the first cause, and supreme orderer of all things, the author of sin; in that he has so constituted the state and course of things that sinful volitions become necessary, in consequence of his disposal.

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Dr. Whitby, in his Discourse on the Freedom of the Will,* cites one of the ancients, as on his side, declaring that this opinion of the necessity of the Will "absolves sinners, as doing nothing of their own accord which was evil, and would cast all the blame of all the wickedness committed in the world, upon God, and upon his Providence, if that were admitted by the assertors of this fate; whether he himself did necessitate them to do these things, or ordered matters so, that they should be constrained to do them by some other cause." And the doctor says, in another place,† "In the nature of the thing, and in the opinion of philosophers, *causa deficiens, in rebus necessariis, ad causam per se efficientem reducenda est.* In things necessary, the deficient cause must be reduced to the efficient. And in this case the reason is evident; because the not doing what is required, or not avoiding what is forbidden, being a defect, must follow from the position of the necessary cause of that deficiency."

Concerning this, I would observe the following things.

I. If there be any difficulty in this matter, it is nothing peculiar to this scheme; it is no difficulty or disadvantage, wherein it is distinguished from the scheme of *Arminians*; and, therefore, not reasonably objected by them.

Dr. Whitby supposes, that if sin necessarily follows from God's withholding assistance, or if that assistance be not given, which is absolutely necessary to the avoiding of evil; then, in the nature of the thing, God must be as properly the author of that evil, as if he were the efficient cause of it. From whence, according to what he himself says of the devils and damned spirits, God must be the proper author of their perfect unrestrained wickedness: He must be the efficient cause of the great pride of the devils, and of their perfect malignity against God, Christ, his saints, and all that is good, and of the insatiable cruelty of their disposition. For he allows, that God has so forsaken them, and does so withhold his assistance from them, that they are incapacitated for doing good, and determined only to evil.‡ Our doctrine, in its conse-

* On the Five Points, p. 361. † Ibid, p. 486. ‡ Ibid, p. 302, 304.

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quence, makes God the author of men's sin in this world, no more, and in no other sense, than his doctrine, in its consequence, makes God the author of the hellish pride and malice of the devils. And doubtless the latter is as odious an effect as the former.

Again, if it will follow at all, that God is the author of sin, from what has been supposed of a sure and infallible connexion between antecedents and consequents, it will follow because of this, viz. that for God to be the author or orderer of those things which, he knows beforehand, will infallibly be attended with such a consequence, is the same thing, in effect, as for him to be the author of that consequence. But, if this be so, this is a difficulty which equally attends the doctrine of *Arminians* themselves; at least, of those of them who allow God's certain foreknowledge of all events. For, on the supposition of such a foreknowledge, this is the case with respect to every sin that is committed: God knew, that if he ordered and brought to pass such and such events, such sins would infallibly follow. As for instance, God certainly foreknew, long before Judas was born, that if he ordered things so, that there should be such a man born, at such a time, and at such a place, and that his life should be preserved, and that he should, in Divine Providence, be led into acquaintance with Jesus; and that his heart should be so influenced by God's Spirit or Providence, as to be inclined to be a follower of Christ; and that he should be one of those twelve, which should be chosen constantly to attend him as his family; and that his health should be preserved, so that he should go up to Jerusalem, at the last passover in Christ's life; and if it should be so ordered, that Judas should see Christ's kind treatment of the woman which anointed him at Bethany, and have that reproof from Christ, which he had at that time, and see and hear other things, which excited his enmity against his master, and that if other circumstances should be ordered, as they were ordered; it would be what would most certainly and infallibly follow, that Judas would betray his Lord, and would soon after hang himself, and die impenitent, and be sent to hell, for his horrid wickedness.

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Therefore, this supposed difficulty ought not to be brought as an objection against the scheme which has been maintained, as disagreeing with the Arminian scheme, seeing it is no difficulty owing to such disagreement; but a difficulty wherein the Arminians share with us. That must be unreasonably made an objection against our differing from them, which we should not escape or avoid at all by agreeing with them.

And therefore I would observe,

II. They who object, that this doctrine makes God the author of sin, ought distinctly to explain what they mean by that phrase, *The author of sin*. I know the phrase, as it is commonly used, signifies something very ill. If by *the author of sin*, be meant *the sinner*, *the agent*, or *actor of sin*, or *the doer of a wicked thing*; so it would be a reproach and blasphemy, to suppose God to be the author of sin. In this sense, I utterly deny God to be the author of sin; rejecting such an imputation on the Most High, as what is infinitely to be abhorred; and deny any such thing to be the consequence of what I have laid down. But if, by *the author of sin*, is meant the permitter, or not a hinderer of sin; and, at the same time, a disposer of the state of events, in such a manner, for wise, holy, and most excellent ends and purposes, that sin, if it be permitted or not hindered, will most certainly and infallibly follow: I say, if this be all that is meant, by being the author of sin, I do not deny that God is the author of sin (though I dislike and reject the phrase, as that which by use and custom is apt to carry another sense) it is no reproach for the Most High to be thus the author of sin. This is not to be the *actor of sin*, but, on the contrary, *of holiness*. What God doth herein, is holy; and a glorious exercise of the infinite excellency of his nature. And, I do not deny, that God's being thus the author of sin, follows from what I have laid down; and, I assert, that it equally follows from the doctrine which is maintained by most of the *Arminian* divines.

That it is most certainly so, that God is in such a manner the disposer and orderer of sin, is evident, if any credit is to be given to the scripture; as well as because it is impossible, in

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the nature of things, to be otherwise. In such a manner God ordered the obstinacy of Pharaoh, in his refusing to obey God's commands, to let the people go. Exod. iv. 21. "I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go." Chap. vii. 2....5. "Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that I may lay mine hand upon Egypt, by great judgments," &c. Chap. ix. 12. "And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them, as the Lord had spoken unto Moses." Chap. x. 1, 2. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him, and that thou mayest tell it in the ears of thy son, and thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done amongst them, that ye may know that I am the Lord." Chap. xiv. 4. "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them: And I will be honored upon Pharaoh, and upon all his Host." Verse 8. "And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh King of Egypt, and he pursued after the Children of Israel." And it is certain, that in such a manner, God, for wise and good ends, ordered that event, Joseph's being sold into Egypt, by his brethren. Gen. xlv. 5. "Now, therefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life." Verse 7, 8. "God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance: So now it was not you, that sent me hither, but God." Psal. cv. 17. "He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant." It is certain, that thus God ordered the sin and folly of Sihon King of the Amorites, in refusing to let the people of Israel pass by him peaceably. Deut. ii. 30. "But Sihon King of Heshbon would not let us pass by him; for the Lord thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thine hand." It is certain, that God thus ordered the sin and folly of the Kings

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of Canaan, that they attempted not to make peace with Israel, but with a stupid boldness and obstinacy, set themselves violently to oppose them and their God. Josh. xi. 20. "For it was of the Lord, to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favor; but that he might destroy them, as the Lord commanded Moses." It is evident, that thus God ordered the treacherous rebellion of Zedekiah against the King of Babylon. Jer. lii. 3. "For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem, and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the King of Babylon." So 2 Kings xxiv. 20. And it is exceeding manifest, that God thus ordered the rapine and unrighteous ravages of Nebuchadnezzar, in spoiling and running the nations round about. Jer. xxv. 9. "Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against all the nations round about; and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations." Chap. xliii. 10, 11. "I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and I will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid, and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them. And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, and deliver such as are for death to death, and such as are for captivity to captivity, and such as are for the sword to the sword." Thus God represents himself as sending for Nebuchadnezzar, and taking of him and his armies, and bringing him against the nations, which were to be destroyed by him, to that very end, that he might utterly destroy them, and make them desolate; and as appointing the work that he should do, so particularly, that the very persons were designed that he should kill with the sword, and those that should be killed with famine and pestilence, and those that should be carried into captivity; and that in doing all these things, he should act as his servant; by which, less cannot be intended, than that he should serve his purposes and designs. And in Jer. xxvii. 4, 5, 6. God declares, how he would cause him thus to serve

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his designs, viz. by bringing this to pass in his sovereign disposal, as the great Possessor and Governor of the universe, that disposes all things just as pleases him. "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel; I have made the earth, the man and the beast, that are upon the ground, by my great power, and my stretched out arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me; and now I have given all these lands into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, MY SERVANT, and the beasts of the field have I given also to serve him." And Nebuchadnezzar is spoken of as doing these things, by having his arms strengthened by God, and having *God's sword put into his hands, for this end.* Ezek. xxx. 24, 25, 26. Yea, God speaks of his terribly ravaging and wasting the nations, and cruelly destroying all sorts, without distinction of sex or age, as the weapon in God's hand, and the instrument of his indignation, which God makes use of to fulfil his own purposes, and execute his own vengeance. Jer. li. 20, &c. "Thou art my battle axe, and weapons of war: For with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms, and with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider, and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider; with thee also will I break in pieces man and woman, and with thee will I break in pieces old and young, and with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid," &c. It is represented, that the designs of Nebuchadnezzar, and those that destroyed Jerusalem, never could have been accomplished, had not God determined them, as well as they. Lam. iii. 37. "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, and the Lord commandeth it not?" And yet the king of Babylon's thus destroying the nations, and especially the *Jews*, is spoken of as his great wickedness, for which God finally destroyed him. Isa. xiv. 4, 5, 6, 12. Hab. ii. 5....12, and Jer. chap. l. and li. It is most manifest, that God, to serve his own designs, providentially ordered Shimei's cursing David. 2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11. "The Lord hath said unto him, curse David....Let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him.

It is certain, that God thus, for excellent, holy, gracious and glorious ends ordered the fact which they committed, who

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were concerned in Christ's death; and that therein they did but fulfil God's designs. As, I trust, no Christian will deny it was the design of God that Christ should *be crucified*, and that for this end, he came into the world. It is very manifest by many scriptures, that the whole affair of Christ's crucifixion, with its circumstances, and the treachery of Judas, that made way for it, was ordered in God's Providence, in pursuance of his purpose; notwithstanding the violence that is used with those plain scriptures, to obscure and pervert the sense of them. Acts ii. 23. "Him being delivered, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,* ye have taken, and with wicked hands, have crucified and slain." Luke 21, 22.† "But behold the hand of him that betrayeth me, is with me on the table; and truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined." Acts iv. 27, 28. "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. Acts iii. 17, 18. "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers; but these things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." So that what these murderers of Christ did, is spoken of as what God brought to pass or ordered, and that by which he fulfilled his own word.

* "Grotius, as well as Beza, observes, *prognosis* must here signify decree; and Elsner has shewn that it has that signification, in approved Greek writers. And it is certain *Ekdotos* signifies one given up into the hands of an enemy." *Dodd. in Loc.*

† "As this passage is not liable to the ambiguities, which some have apprehended in Acts ii. 23, and iv 28, (which yet seem on the whole to be parallel to it, in their most natural construction) I look upon it as an evident proof, that these things are, in the language of scripture, said to be determined or decreed (or exactly bounded and marked out by God as the word *Orizo* most naturally signifies) which he sees in fact will happen, in consequence of his volitions, without any necessitating agency; as well as those events, of which he is properly the Author." *Dodd. in Loc.*

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In Rev. xvii. 17, the agreeing of the kings of the earth to give their kingdom to the beast, though it was a very wicked thing in them, is spoken of as a fulfilling of God's Will, and what God had put into their hearts to do. It is manifest that God sometimes permits sin to be committed, and at the same time orders things so, that if he permits the fact, it will come to pass, because, on some accounts, he sees it needful and of importance, that it should come to pass. Matth. xviii. 7. "It must needs be, that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh." With 1 Cor. xi. 19. "For there must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."

Thus it is certain and demonstrable from the Holy Scriptures, as well as the nature of things, and the principles of Arminians, that God permits sin, and at the same time, so orders things, in his Providence, that it certainly and infallibly will come to pass, in consequence of his permission.

I proceed to observe in the next place,

III. That there is a great difference between God's being concerned thus, by his permission, in an event and act, which, in the inherent subject and agent of it, is sin, (though the event will certainly follow on his permission) and his being concerned in it by producing it and exerting the act of sin; or between his being the Orderer of its certain existence, by not hindering it, under certain circumstances, and his being the proper Actor or Author of it, by a positive agency or efficiency. And this, notwithstanding what Dr. Whitby offers about a saying of philosophers, that *causa deficiens, in rebus necessariis, ad causam per se efficientem reducenda est.* As there is a vast difference between the sun's being the cause of the lightsomeness and warmth of the atmosphere, and brightness of gold and diamonds, by its presence and positive influence; and its being the occasion of darkness and frost, in the night, by its motion, whereby it descends below the horizon. The motion of the sun is the occasion of the latter kind of events; but it is not the proper cause, efficient or producer of them; though they are necessarily consequent

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on that motion under such circumstances; no more is any action of the Divine Being the cause of the evil of men's Wills. If the sun were the proper cause of cold and darkness, it would be the fountain of these things, as it is the fountain of light and heat; and then something might be argued from the nature of cold and darkness, to a likeness of nature in the sun; and it might be justly inferred, that the sun itself is dark and cold, and that its beams are black and frosty. But from its being the cause no otherwise than by its departure, no such thing can be inferred, but the contrary; it may justly be argued, that the sun is a bright and hot body, if cold and darkness are found to be the consequences of its withdrawment; and the more constantly and necessarily these effects are connected with, and confined to its absence, the more strongly does it argue the sun to be the fountain of light and heat. So, inasmuch as sin is not the fruit of any positive agency or influence of the Most High, but, on the contrary, arises from the witholding of his action and energy, and, under certain circumstances, necessarily follows on the want of his influence; this is no argument that he is sinful, or his operation evil, or has any thing of the nature of evil, but, on the contrary, that He and his agency are altogether good and holy, and that He is the fountain of all holiness. It would be strange arguing, indeed, because men never commit sin, but only when God leaves them to themselves, and necessarily sin, when he does so, that therefore their sin is not from themselves but from God; and so, that God must be a sinful Being; as strange as it would be to argue, because it is always dark when the sun is gone, and never dark when the sun is present, that therefore all darkness is from the sun, and that his disk and beams must needs be black.

IV. It properly belongs to the Supreme and Absolute Governor of the universe, to order all important events within his dominion, by his wisdom; but the events in the moral world are of the most important kind, such as the moral actions of intelligent creatures, and their consequences.

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These events will be ordered by something. They will either be disposed by wisdom, or they will be disposed by chance; that is, they will be disposed by blind and undesigning causes, if that were possible, and could be called a disposal. Is it not better, that the good and evil which happens in God's world, should be ordered, regulated, bounded and determined by the good pleasure of an infinitely wise Being, who perfectly comprehends within his understanding and constant view, the universality of things, in all their extent and duration, and sees all the influence of every event, with respect to every individual thing and circumstance, throughout the grand system, and the whole of the eternal series of consequences; than to leave these things to fall out by chance, and to be determined by those causes which have no understanding or aim? Doubtless, in these important events, there is a better and a worse, as to the time, subject, place, manner and circumstances of their coming to pass, with regard to their influence on the state and course of things. And if there be, it is certainly best that they should be determined to that time, place, &c. which is best. And therefore it is in its own nature fit, that wisdom, and not chance, should order these things. So that it belongs to the Being, who is the possessor of Infinite Wisdom, and is the Creator and Owner of the whole system of created existences, and has the care of all; I say, it belongs to him to take care of this matter; and he would not do what is proper for him, if he should neglect it. And it is so far from being unholy in him to undertake this affair, that it would rather have been unholy to neglect it, as it would have been a neglecting what fitly appertains to him; and so it would have been a very unfit and unsuitable neglect.

Therefore the sovereignty of God doubtless extends to this matter; especially considering, that if it should be supposed to be otherwise, and God should leave men's volitions, and all moral events, to the determination and disposition of blind and unmeaning causes, or they should be left to happen perfectly without a cause; this would be no more consistent with liberty, in any notion of it, and particularly not in the Ar-

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minian notion of it, than if these events were subject to the disposal of Divine Providence, and the Will of man were determined by circumstances which are ordered and disposed by Divine Wisdom; as appears by what has been already observed. But it is evident, that such a providential disposing and determining men's moral actions, though it infers a moral necessity of those actions, yet it does not in the least infringe the real liberty of mankind; the only liberty that common sense teaches to be necessary to moral agency, which, as has been demonstrated, is not inconsistent with such necessity.

On the whole, it is manifest, that God may be, in the manner which has been described, the Orderer and Disposer of that event, which, in the inherent subject and agent, is moral evil; and yet His so doing may be no moral evil. He may will the disposal of such an event, and its coming to pass for good ends, and his Will not be an immoral or sinful Will, but a perfectly holy Will. And he may actually, in his Providence, so dispose and permit things, that the event may be certainly and infallibly connected with such disposal and permission, and his act therein not be an immoral or unholy, but a perfectly holy act. Sin may be an evil thing, and yet that there should be such a disposal and permission, as that it should come to pass, may be a good thing. This is no contradiction or inconsistence. Joseph's brethren selling him into Egypt, consider it only as it was acted by them, and with respect to their views and aims which were evil, was a very bad thing; but it was a good thing, as it was an event of God's ordering, and considered with respect to his views and aims which were good. Gen. l. 20. "As for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good. So the crucifixion of Christ, if we consider only those things which belong to the event as it proceeded from his murderers, and are comprehended within the compass of the affair considered as their act, their principles, dispositions, views and aims; so it was one of the most heinous things that ever was done, in many respects the most horrid of all acts: But consider it, as it was

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willed and ordered of God, in the extent of his designs and views, it was the most admirable and glorious of all events, and God's willing the event, was the most holy volition of God that ever was made known to men; and God's act in ordering it was a divine act, which, above all others, manifests the moral excellency of the Divine Being.

The consideration of these things may help us to a sufficient answer to the cavils of Arminians, concerning what has been supposed by many Calvinists, of a distinction between a secret and revealed will of God, and their diversity one from the other, supposing that the Calvinists herein ascribe inconsistent Wills to the Most High; which is without any foundation. God's secret and revealed Will, or in other words, his disposing and preceptive Will may be diverse, and exercised in dissimilar acts, the one in disapproving and opposing, the other in willing and determining, without any inconsistence. Because, although these dissimilar exercises of the Divine Will may, in some respects, relate to the same things, yet, in strictness, they have different and contrary objects, the one evil, and the other good. Thus, for instance, the crucifixion of Christ was a thing contrary to the revealed or preceptive Will of God, because, as it was viewed and done by his malignant murderers, it was a thing infinitely contrary to the holy nature of God, and so necessarily contrary to the holy inclination of his heart revealed in his law. Yet this does not at all hinder but that the crucifixion of Christ, considered with all those glorious consequences, which were within the view of the Divine Omniscience, might be indeed, and therefore might appear to God to be, a glorious event, and consequently be agreeable to his Will, though this Will may be secret, i. e. not revealed in God's law. And thus considered, the crucifixion of Christ was not evil, but good. If the secret exercises of God's Will were of a kind that is dissimilar, and contrary to his revealed Will, respecting the same, or like objects; if the objects of both were good, or both evil; then, indeed, to ascribe contrary kinds of volition or inclination to God, respecting these objects, would be to ascribe an incon-

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sistent Will to God; but to ascribe to him different and opposite exercises of heart, respecting different objects, and objects contrary one to another, is so far from supposing God's Will to be inconsistent with itself, that it cannot be supposed consistent with itself any other way. For any being to have a Will of choice respecting good, and at the same time a Will of rejection and refusal respecting evil, is to be very consistent; but the contrary, viz. to have the same Will towards these contrary objects, and to choose and love both good and evil, at the same time, is to be very inconsistent.

There is no inconsistence in supposing, that God may hate a thing as it is in itself, and considered simply as evil, and yet that it may be his Will it should come to pass, considering all consequences. I believe, there is no person of good understanding, who will venture to say, he is certain that it is impossible it should be best, taking in the whole compass and extent of existence, and all consequences in the endless series of events, that there should be such a thing as moral evil in the world.* And if so, it will certainly follow,

* Here are worthy to be observed some passages of a late noted writer, of our nation, that nobody who is acquainted with him, will suspect to be very favorable to Calvinism. "It is difficult, (says he,) to handle the necessity of evil in such a manner, as not to stumble such as are not above being alarmed at propositions which have an uncommon sound. But if philosophers will but reflect calmly on the matter, they will find, that consistently with the unlimited power of the Supreme Cause, it may be said, that in the best ordered system, evils must have place." *Turnbull's Principles of Moral Philosophy*, p. 327, 328. He is there speaking of moral evils, as may be seen.

Again the same author, in his second vol. entitled *Christian Philosophy*, p. 35, has these words: "If the Author and Governor of all things be infinitely perfect, then whatever is, is right; of all possible systems he hath chosen the best; and consequently, there is no absolute evil in the universe. This being the case, all the seeming imperfections or evils in it are such only in a partial view; and with respect to the whole system, they are *goods*."

Ibid, p 37. "Whence then comes evil? Is the question that hath, in all ages, been reckoned the *Gordian knot* in philosophy. And indeed, if we own the existence of evil in the world in an absolute sense, we diametrically contradict what hath been just now proved of God. For if there be any evil in the system that is not good in respect to the whole, then is the whole

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that an infinitely wise Being, who always chooses what is best, must choose that there should be such a thing. And, if so, then such a choice is not an evil, but a wise and holy choice. And if so, then that Providence which is agreeable to such a choice, is a wise and holy Providence. Men do will sin as sin, and so are the authors and actors of it: They love it as sin, and for evil ends and purposes. God does not will sin as sin, or for the sake of any thing evil; though it be his pleasure so to order things, that He permitting, sin will come to pass, for the sake of the great good that by his disposal shall be the consequence. His willing to order things so that evil should come to pass, for the sake of the contrary good, is no argument that He does not hate evil, as evil; and if so, then it is no reason why he may not reasonably forbid evil, as evil, and punish it as such.

The Arminians themselves must be obliged, whether they will or no, to allow a distinction of God's Will, amounting to just the same thing that Calvinists intend by their distinction of a secret and revealed Will. They must allow a distinction of those things which God thinks best should be, considering

not good, but evil, or at best, very imperfect; and an author must be as his workmanship is: As is the effect, such is the cause. But the solution of this difficulty is at hand: That there is no evil in the universe. What! Are there no pains, no imperfections? Is there no misery, no vice in the world? Or are not these evils? Evils indeed they are; that is, those of one sort are hurtful, and those of the other sort are equally hurtful and abominable; but they are not evil or mischievous with respect to the whole."

Ibid, p. 42. "But He is at the same time, said to create evil, darkness, confusion, and yet to do no evil, but to be the Author of good only. He is called "the Father of lights, the Author of every perfect and good gift, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning," who "tempteth no man, but giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." And yet by the prophet Isaias, He is introduced saying of Himself, "I form light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord, do all these things." What is the meaning, the plain language of all this, but that the Lord delighteth in goodness, and, as the Scripture speaks, *evil is his strange work?* He intends and pursues the universal *good* of his creation; and the *evil* which happens, is not permitted for its own sake, or through any pleasure in evil, but because it is requisite to the *greater good* pursued."

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all circumstances and consequences, and so are agreeable to his disposing Will, and those things which he loves, and are agreeable to his nature, in themselves considered. Who is there that will dare to say, that the hellish pride, malice and cruelty of devils are agreeable to God, and what He likes and approves? And yet, I trust, there is no Christian divine but what will allow, that it is agreeable to God's Will so to order and dispose things concerning them, so to leave them to themselves, and give them up to their own wickedness, that this perfect wickedness should be a necessary consequence. Beaure Dr. Whitby's words do plainly suppose and allow it.*

The following things may be laid down as maxims of plain truth, and indisputable evidence.

1. That God is a perfectly happy Being, in the most absolute and highest sense possible.

2. That it will follow from hence, that God is free from every thing that is contrary to happiness, and so, that in strict propriety of speech, there is no such thing as any pain, grief, or trouble in God.

3. When any intelligent being is really crossed and disappointed, and things are contrary to what he truly desires, he is the less pleased or has less pleasure, his pleasure and happiness is diminished, and he suffers what is disagreeable to him, or is the subject of something that is of a nature contrary to joy and happiness, even pain and grief.†

From this last axiom, it follows, that if no distinction is to be admitted between God's hatred of sin, and his Will with respect to the event and the existence of sin, as the all-wise Determiner of all events, under the view of all consequen-

* *Whitby on the Five Points*, Edit. 2, p. 300, 305, 309.

† Certainly it is not less absurd and unreasonable, to talk of God's Will and desire's being truly and properly crossed, without his suffering any uneasiness, or any thing grievous or disagreeable, than it is to talk of something that may be called a revealed Will, which may, in some respect, be different from a secret purpose; which purpose may be fulfilled, when the other is opposed.

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ces through the whole compass and series of things; I say, then it certainly follows, that the coming to pass of every individual act of sin is truly, all things considered, contrary to his Will, and that his Will is really crossed in it; and this in proportion as He hates it. And as God's hatred of sin is infinite, by reason of the infinite contrariety of his holy nature to sin; so his Will is infinitely crossed, in every act of sin that happens. Which is as much as to say, He endures that which is infinitely disagreeable to him, by means of every act of sin that He sees committed. And, therefore, as appears by the preceding positions, He endures truly and really, infinite grief or pain from every sin. And so He must be infinitely crossed, and suffer infinite pain, every day, in millions of millions of instances: He must continually be the subject of an immense number of real, and truly infinitely great crosses and vexations. Which would be to make him infinitely the most miserable of all beings.

If any objector should say; all that these things amount to, is, that *God may do evil that good may come;* which is justly esteemed immoral and sinful in men; and therefore may be justly esteemed inconsistent with the moral prerfections of God: I answer, that for God to dispose and permit evil, in the manner that has been spoken of, is not to do evil that good may come; for it is not to do evil at all....In order to a thing's being morally evil, there must be one of these things belonging to it: Either it must be a thing unfit and unsuitable in its own nature; or it must have a bad tendency; or it must proceed from an evil disposition, and be done for an evil end. But neither of these things can be attributed to God's ordering and permitting such events, as the immoral acts of creatures, for good ends. (1.) It is not unfit in its own nature, that He should do so. For it is in its own nature fit, that infinite wisdom, and not blind chance, should dispose moral good and evil in the world. And it is fit, that the Being who has infinite wisdom, and is the Maker, Owner and Supreme Governor of the world, should take care of that matter. And, therefore, there is no unfitness, or unsuitableness in his doing it. It may be unfit, and so immoral, for any other be-

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ings to go about to order this affair; because they are not possessed of a wisdom, that in any manner fits them for it; and, in other respects, they are not fit to be trusted with this affair; nor does it belong to them, they not being the owners and lords of the universe.

We need not be afraid to affirm, that if a wise and good man knew with absolute certainty, it would be best, all things considered, that there should be such a thing as moral evil in the world, it would not be contrary to his wisdom and goodness, for him to choose that it should be so. It is no evil desire, to desire good, and to desire that which, all things considered, is best. And it is no unwise choice, to choose that that should be, which it is best should be; and to choose the existence of that thing concerning which this is known, viz. that it is best it should be, and so is known in the whole to be most worthy to be chosen. On the contrary, it would be a plain defect in wisdom and goodness, for him not to choose it. And the reason why he might not order it, if he were able, would not be because he might not desire it, but only the ordering of that matter does not belong to him. But it is no harm for Him who is, by right, and in the greatest propriety, the Supreme Orderer of all things, to order every thing in such a manner, as it would be a point of wisdom in Him to choose that they should be ordered. If it would be a plain defect of wisdom and goodness in a Being, not to choose that that should be, which He certainly knows it would, all things considered, be best should be (as was but now observed) then it must be impossible for a Being who has no defect of wisdom and goodness, to do otherwise than choose it should be; and that, for this very reason, because He is perfectly wise and good. And if it be agreeable to perfect wisdom and goodness for him to choose that it should be, and the ordering of all things supremely and perfectly belongs to him, it must be agreeable to infinite wisdom and goodness, to order that it should be. If the choice is good, the ordering and disposing things according to that choice must also be good. It can be no harm in one to whom it belongs *to do his Will in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth*, to execute

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a good volition. If his Will be good, and the object of his Will be, all things considered, good and best, then the choosing or willing it, is not willing evil that good may come. And if so, then his ordering, according to that Will, is not doing evil, that good may come.

2. It is not of a bad tendency, for the Supreme Being thus to order and permit that moral evil to be, which it is best should come to pass. For that it is of good tendency, is the very thing supposed in the point now in question. Christ's crucifixion, though a most horrid fact in them that perpetrated it, was of most glorious tendency as permitted and ordered of God.

3. Nor is there any need of supposing it proceeds from any evil disposition or aim; for by the supposition, what is aimed at is good, and good is the actual issue, in the final result of things.

SECTION X.

Concerning Sin's first Entrance *into the World.*

THE things, which have already been offered, may serve to obviate or clear many of the objections which might be raised concerning sin's first coming into the world; as though it would follow from the doctrine maintained, that God must be the author of the first sin, through his so disposing things, that it should necessarily follow from his permission, that the sinful act should be committed, &c. I need not, therefore, stand to repeat what has been said already, about such a necessity's not proving God to be the author of sin, in any ill sense, or in any such sense as to infringe any liberty of man, concerned in his moral agency, or capacity of blame, guilt and punishment.

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But, if it should nevertheless be said, supposing the case so, that God, when he had made man, might so order his circumstances, that from these circumstances, together with his withholding further assistance and divine influence, his sin would infallibly follow, why might not God as well have first made man with a fixed prevailing principle of sin in his heart?

I answer,

I. It was meet, if sin did come into existence, and appear in the world, it should arise from the imperfection which properly belongs to a creature, as such, and should appear so to do, that it might appear not to be from God as the efficient or fountain. But this could not have been, if man had been made at first with sin in his heart; nor unless the abiding principle and habit of sin were first introduced by an evil act of the creature. If sin had not arisen from the imperfection of the creature, it would not have been so visible, that it did not arise from God, as the positive cause, and real source of it....But it would require room that cannot be here allowed, fully to consider all the difficulties which have been started, concerning the first entrance of sin into the world.

And therefore,

II. I would observe, that objections against the doctrine that has been laid down, in opposition to the *Arminian* notion of liberty, from these difficulties, are altogether impertinent; because no additional difficulty is incurred, by adhering to a scheme in this manner differing from theirs, and none would be removed or avoided, by agreeing with, and maintaining theirs. Nothing that the *Arminians* say, about the contingence, or selfdetermining power of man's will, can serve to explain, with less difficulty, how the first sinful volition of mankind could take place, and man be justly charged with the blame of it. To say, the Will was selfdetermined, or determined by free choice, in that sinful volition; which is to say, that the first sinful volition was determined by a foregoing sinful volition; is no solution of the difficulty. It is an odd way of solving difficulties, to advance greater, in order to it. To say,

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two and two make nine; or, that a child begat his father, solves no difficulty: No more does it, to say, the first sinful act of choice was before the first sinful act of choice, and chose and determined it, and brought it to pass. Nor is it any better solution, to say, the first sinful volition chose, determined and produced itself; which is to say, it was before it was. Nor will it go any further towards helping us over the difficulty to say, the first sinful volition arose accidentally, without any cause at all; any more than it will solve that difficult question, *How the world could be made out of nothing?* To say, it came into being out of nothing, without any cause; as has been already observed. And if we should allow that that could be, that the first evil volition should arise by perfect accident, without any cause; it would relieve no difficulty, about God's laying the blame of it to man. For how was man to blame for perfect accident, which had no cause, and which therefore, he (to be sure) was not the cause of, any more than if it came by some external cause?....Such solutions are no better, than if some person, going about to solve some of the strange mathematical paradoxes, about infinitely great and small quantities; as, that some infinitely great quantities are infinitely greater than some other infinitely great quantities; and also that some infinitely small quantities, are infinitely less than others, which yet are infinitely little; in order to a solution, should say, that mankind have been under a mistake, in supposing a greater quantity to exceed a smaller; and that a hundred, multiplied by ten, makes but a single unit.

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SECTION XI.

Of a supposed Inconsistence of these Principles with GOD'S moral Character.

THE things which have been already observed, may be sufficient to answer most of the objections, and silence the great exclamations of *Arminians* against the *Calvinists*, from the supposed inconsistence of *Calvinistic* principles with the moral perfections of God, as exercised in his government of mankind. The consistence of such a doctrine of necessity as has been maintained, with the fitness and reasonableness of God's commands, promises and threatenings, rewards and punishments, has been particularly considered; the cavils of our opponents, as though our doctrine of necessity made God the author of sin, have been answered; and also their objection against these principles, as inconsistent with God's sincerity, in his counsels, invitations and persuasions, has been already obviated, in what has been observed respecting the consistence of what *Calvinists* suppose, concerning the secret and revealed Will of God; by that it appears, there is no repugnance in supposing it may be the secret Will of God, that his ordination and permission of events should be such, that it shall be a certain consequence, that a thing never will come to pass; which yet it is man's duty to do, and so God's preceptive Will that he should do; and this is the same thing as to say, God may sincerely command and require him to do it. And if he may be sincere in commanding him, he may, for the same reason, be sincere in counselling, inviting and using persuasions with him to do it. Counsels and invitations are manifestations of God's preceptive Will, or of what God loves and what is in itself, and as man's act, agreeable to his heart; and not of his disposing Will, and what he chooses as a part of his own infinite scheme of things. It has been particularly shewn, Part III. Sect. IV. that such a necessity as

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has been maintained, is not inconsistent with the propriety and fitness of divine commands; and for the same reason, not inconsistent with the sincerity of invitations and counsels, in the Corollary at the end of the Section. Yea, it hath been shewn, Part III. Sect. VII. Corol. 1, that this objection of *Arminians*, concerning the sincerity and use of divine exhortations, invitations and counsels, is demonstrably against themselves.

Notwithstanding, I would further observe, that the difficulty of reconciling the sincerity of counsels, invitations and persuasions with such an antecedent known fixedness of all events, as has been supposed, is not peculiar to this scheme, as distinguished from that of the generality of *Arminians*, which acknowledges the absolute foreknowledge of God; and therefore, it would be unreasonably brought as an objection against my differing from them. The main, seeming difficulty in the case is this; that God, in counselling, inviting and persuading, makes a shew of aiming at, seeking and using endeavors for the thing exhorted and persuaded to; whereas, it is impossible for any intelligent being truly to seek, or use endeavors for a thing, which he at the same time knows, most perfectly, will not come to pass; and that it is absurd to suppose, he makes the obtaining of a thing his end, in his calls and counsels, which he, at the same time, infallibly knows will not be obtained by these means. Now, if God knows this, in the utmost certainty and perfection, the way by which he comes by this knowledge makes no difference. If he knows it is by the necessity which he sees in things, or by some other means; it alters not the case. But it is in effect allowed by *Arminians* themselves, that God's inviting and persuading men to do things, which he at the same time, certainly knows will not be done, is no evidence of insincerity; because they allow, that God has a certain foreknowledge of all men's sinful actions and omissions. And as this is thus implicitly allowed by most *Arminians*, so all that pretend to own the scriptures to be the word of God, must be constrained to allow it....God commanded and counselled Pharaoh to let his people go, and used arguments and persuasions to induce him

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to it; he laid before him arguments taken from his infinite greatness and almighty power, (Exod vii. 16,) and forewarned him of the fatal consequences of his refusal, from time to time. (Chap. viii. 1, 2, 20, 21. Chap. ix. 1....5, 13....17, and x. 3, 6.) He commanded Moses, and the elders of Israel, to go and beseech Pharaoh to let the people go; and at the same time told them, he knew surely that he would not comply with it. Exod. iii. 18, 19. "And thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and you shall say unto him; the Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us; and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God; and, I am sure, that the king of Egypt will not let you go." So our blessed Saviour, the evening wherein he was betrayed, knew that Peter would shamefully deny him, before the morning; for he declares it to him with asseverations, to shew the certainty of it; and tells the disciples, that all of them should be offended because of him that night; Matth. xxvi. 31....35. Luke xxii. 31....34. John xiii. 38. John xvi. 32. And yet it was their duty to avoid these things: They were very sinful things, which God had forbidden, and which it was their duty to watch and pray against; and they were obliged to do so from the counsels and persuasions Christ used with them, at that very time, so to do; Matth. xxvi. 41. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." So that whatever difficulty there can be in this matter, it can be no objection against any principles which have been maintained in opposition to the principles of *Arminians*; nor does it any more concern me to remove the difficulty, than it does them, or indeed all, that call themselves Christians, and acknowledge the divine authority of the scriptures....Nevertheless, this matter may possibly (God allowing) be more particularly and largely considered, in some future discourse, on the doctrine of predestination.

But I would here observe, that however the defenders of that notion of liberty of Will, which I have opposed, exclaim against the doctrine of Calvinists, as tending to bring men into doubts concerning the moral perfections of God; it is

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their scheme, and not the scheme of Calvinists, that indeed is justly chargeable with this. For it is one of the most fundamental points of their scheme of things, that a freedom of Will, consisting in selfdetermination, without all necessity, is essential to moral agency. This is the same thing as to say, that such a determination of the will, without all necessity, must be in all intelligent beings, in those things, wherein they are moral agents, or in their moral acts; and from this it will follow, that God's Will is not necessarily determined, in any thing he does, as a moral agent, or in any of his acts that are of a moral nature. So that in all things, wherein he acts holily, justly and truly, he does not act necessarily; or his Will is not necessarily determined, to act holily and justly; because, if it were necessarily determined, he would not be a moral agent in thus acting. His Will would be attended with necessity, which, they say, is inconsistent with moral agency. "He can act no otherwise: He is at no liberty in the affair: He is determined by unavoidable, invincible necessity; therefore such agency is no moral agency, yea, no agency at all, properly speaking. A necessary agent is no agent; he being passive, and subject to necessity, what he does is no act of his, but an effect of a necessity prior to any act of his."

This is agreeable to their manner of arguing. Now then what is become of all our proof of the moral perfections of God? How can we prove, that God certainly will, in any one instance, do that which is just and holy; seeing his Will is determined in the matter by no necessity? We have no other way of proving that any thing certainly will be, but only by the necessity of the event. Where we can see no necessity but that the thing may be, or may not be, there we are unavoidably left at a loss. We have no other way properly and truly to demonstrate the moral perfections of God, but the way that Mr. Chubb proves them in p. 252, 261, 262, 263, of his Tracts, viz. that God must necessarily perfectly know, what is most worthy and valuable in itself, which, in the nature of things, is best and fittest to be done. And as this is most eligible in itself, He, being omniscient, must see it to be

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so; and being both omniscient and selfsufficient, cannot have any temptation to reject it, and so must necessarily will that which is best. And thus, by this necessity of the determination of God's Will to what is good and best, we demonstrably establish God's moral character.

Corol. From things which have been observed, it appears that most of the arguments from Scripture which Arminians make use of to support their scheme, are no other than begging the question. For in these arguments, they determine in the first place, that without such a freedom of Will as they hold, men cannot be proper moral agents, nor the subjects of command, counsel, persuasion, invitation, promises, threatenings, expostulations, rewards and punishments; and that without such freedom it is to no purpose for men to take any care, or use any diligence, endeavors or means, in order to their avoiding sin, or becoming holy, escaping punishment or obtaining happiness; and having supposed these things, which are grand things in question in the debate, then they heap up Scriptures, containing commands, counsels, calls, warnings, persuasions, expostulations, promises and threatenings; (as doubtless they may find enough such; the Bible is confessedly full of them, from the beginning to the end) and then they glory, how full the Scripture is on their side, how many more texts there are that evidently favor their scheme, than such as seem to favor the contrary. But let them first make manifest the things in question, which they suppose and take for granted, and shew them to be consistent with themselves, and produce clear evidence of their truth, and they have gained their point, as all will confess, without bringing one Scripture. For none denies, that there are commands, counsels, promises, threatenings, &c. in the Bible. But unless they do these things, their multiplying such texts of Scripture is insignificant and vain.

It may further be observed, that such Scriptures as they bring are really against them, and not for them. As it has been demonstrated, that it is their scheme, and not ours, that is inconsistent with the use of motives and persuasives, or

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any moral means whatsoever, to induce men to the practice of virtue, or abstaining from wickedness: Their principles, and not ours, are repugnant to moral agency, and inconsistent with moral government, with law or precept, with the nature of virtue or vice, reward or punishment, and with every thing whatsoever of a moral nature, either on the part of the moral governor, or in the state, actions or conduct of the subject.

SECTION XII.

Of a supposed Tendency of these Principles to Atheism *and* Licentiousness.

IF any object against what has been maintained, that it tends to *Atheism*, I know not on what grounds such an objection can be raised, unless it be that some Atheists have held a doctrine of necessity which they suppose to be like this. But if it be so, I am persuaded the Arminians would not look upon it just, that their notion of freedom and contingence should be charged with a tendency to all the errors that ever any embraced, who have held such opinions. The Stoic philosophers, whom the Calvinists are charged with agreeing with, were no Atheists, but the greatest Theists and nearest akin to Christians in their opinions concerning the unity and the perfections of the Godhead, of all the heathen philosophers. And Epicurus, that chief father of Atheism, maintained no such doctrine of necessity, but was the greatest maintainer of contingence.

The doctrine of necessity, which supposes a necessary connexion of all events, on some antecedent ground and reason of their existence, is the only medium we have to prove the being of God. And the contrary doctrine of contingence,

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even as maintained by Arminians, (which certainly implies or infers, that events may come into existence, or begin to be, without dependence on any thing foregoing, as their cause, ground or reason) takes away all proof of the being of God; which proof is summarily expressed by the apostle, in Rom. i. 20. And this is a tendency to Atheism with a witness. So that, indeed, it is the doctrine of Arminians, and not of the Calvinists, that is justly charged with a tendency to Atheism; it being built on a foundation that is the utter subversion of every demonstrative argument for the proof of a Deity, as has been shown, Part II. Sec. 3.

And whereas it has often been said, that the Calvinistic doctrine of necessity saps the foundations of all religion and virtue, and tends to the greatest licentiousness of practice: This objection is built on the pretence, that our doctrine renders vain all means and endeavors, in order to be virtuous and religious. Which pretence has been already particularly considered in the 5th Section of this Part; where it has been demonstrated, that this doctrine has no such tendency; but that such a tendency is truly to be charged on the contrary doctrine; inasmuch as the notion of contingence, which their doctrine implies, in its certain consequences, overthrows all connexion in every degree, between endeavor and event, means and end.

And besides, if many other things which have been observed to belong to the Arminian doctrine, or to be plain consequences of it, be considered, there will appear just reason to suppose that it is that which must rather tend to licentiousness. Their doctrine excuses all evil inclinations, which men find to be natural; because in such inclinations, they are not selfdetermined, as such inclinations are not owing to any choice or determination of their own Wills. Which leads men wholly to justify themselves in all their wicked actions, so far as natural inclination has a hand in determining their Wills, to the commission of them. Yea, these notions, which suppose moral necessity and inability to be inconsistent with blame or moral obligation, will directly lead men to justify the vilest acts and practices, from the strength of their

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wicked inclinations of all sorts; strong inclinations inducing a moral necessity; yea, to excuse every degree of evil inclination, so far as this has evidently prevailed, and been the thing which has determined their Wills; because, so far as antecedent inclination determined the Will, so far the Will was without liberty of indifference and selfdetermination. Which, at last, will come to this, that men will justify themselves in all the wickedness they commit. It has been observed already, that this scheme of things does exceedingly diminish the guilt of sin, and the difference between the greatest and smallest offences;* and if it be pursued in its consequences, it leaves room for no such thing, as either virtue or vice; blame or praise in the world.† And then again, how naturally does this notion of the sovereign, selfdetermining power of the Will, in all things, virtuous or vicious, and whatsoever deserves either reward or punishment, tend to encourage men to put off the work of religion and virtue, and turning from sin to God; it being that which they have a sovereign power to determine themselves to, just when they please; or if not, they are wholly excusable in going on in sin, because of their inability to do any other.

If it should be said, that the tendency of this doctrine of necessity to licentiousness, appears by the improvement many at this day actually make of it, to justify themselves in their dissolute courses; I will not deny that some men do unreasonably abuse this doctrine, as they do many other things which are true and excellent in their own nature; but I deny that this proves the doctrine itself has any tendency to licentiousness. I think the tendency of doctrines, by what now appears in the world, and in our nation in particular, may much more justly be argued from the general effect which has been seen to attend the prevailing of the principles of Arminians, and the contrary principles; as both have had their turn of general prevalence in our nation. If it be in-

* Part III. Sect. 6. † Part III. Sect. 6. Ibid. Sect. 7. Part IV. Sect. 1. Part III. Sect. 3. Corol. 1, after the first Head.

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deed, as is pretended, that Calvinistic doctrines undermine the very foundation of all religion and morality, and enervate and disannul all rational motives to holy and virtuous practice; and that the contrary doctrines give the inducements to virtue and goodness their proper force, and exhibit religion in a rational light, tending to recommend it to the reason of mankind, and enforce it in a manner that is agreeable to their natural notions of things: I say, if it be thus, it is remarkable that virtue and religious practice should prevail most, when the former doctrines, so inconsistent with it, prevailed almost universally; and that ever since the latter doctrines, so happily agreeing with it, and of so proper and excellent a tendency to promote it, have been gradually prevailing, vice, prophaneness, luxury and wickedness of all sorts, and contempt of all religion, and of every kind of seriousness and strictness of conversation, should proportionably prevail; and that these things should thus accompany one another, and rise and prevail one with another, now for a whole age together. It is remarkable that this happy remedy (discovered by the free inquiries and superior sense and wisdom of this age) against the pernicious effects of Calvinism, so inconsistent with religion, and tending so much to banish all virtue from the earth, should, on so long a trial, be attended with no good effect, but that the consequence should be the reverse of amendment; that in proportion as the remedy takes place, and is thoroughly applied, so the disease should prevail, and the very same dismal effect take place, to the highest degree, which Calvinistic doctrines are supposed to have so great a tendency to, even the banishing of religion and virtue, and the prevailing of unbounded licentiousness of manners. If these things are truly so, they are very remarkable, and matter of very curious speculation.

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SECTION XIII.

Concerning that Objection against the reasoning, by which the Calvinistic doctrine is supported, that it is metaphysical *and* abstruse.

IT has often been objected against the defenders of Calvinistic principles, that in their reasonings they run into nice, scholastic distinctions and abstruse, metaphysical subtilties, and set these in opposition to common sense. And it is possible, that after the former manner it may be alleged against the reasoning by which I have endeavored to confute the Arminian scheme of liberty and moral agency, that it is very abstracted and metaphysical. Concerning this I would observe the following things.

I. If that be made an objection against the foregoing reasoning, that it is metaphysical, or may properly be reduced to the science of metaphysics, it is a very impertinent objection; whether it be so or no, is not worthy of any dispute or controversy. If the reasoning be good, it is as frivolous to inquire what science it is properly reduced to, as what language it is delivered in; and for a man to go about to confute the arguments of his opponent, by telling him his arguments are metaphysical, would be as weak as to tell him his arguments could not be substantial, because they were written in French or Latin. The question is not, whether what is said be metaphysics, logic, or mathematics, Latin, French, English or *Mohawk?* But whether the reasoning be good, and the arguments truly conclusive? The foregoing arguments are no more metaphysical, than those which we use against the Papists, to disprove their doctrine of transubstantiation; alleging it is inconsistent with the notion of corporeal identi-

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ty, that it should be in ten thousand places at the same time. It is by metaphysical arguments only we are able to prove that the rational soul is not corporeal; that lead or sand cannot think; that thoughts are not square or round, or do not weigh a pound. The arguments by which we prove the being of God, if handled closely and distinctly, so as to shew their clear and demonstrative evidence, must be metaphysically treated. It is by metaphysics only, that we can demonstrate, that God is not limited to a place, or is not mutable; that he is not ignorant or forgetful; that it is impossible for him to lie, or be unjust, and that there is one God only, and not hundreds or thousands. And, indeed, we have no strict demonstration of any thing, excepting mathematical truths, but by metaphysics. We can have no proof that is properly demonstrative, of any one proposition, relating to the being and nature of God, his creation of the world, the dependence of all things on him, the nature of bodies or spirits, the nature of our own souls, or any of the great truths of morality and natural religion, but what is metaphysical. I am willing my arguments should be brought to the test of the strictest and justest reason, and that a clear, distinct and determinate meaning of the terms I use, should be insisted on; but let not the whole be rejected, as if all were confuted, by fixing on it the epithet, *metaphysical.*

II. If the reasoning which has been made use of, be in some sense metaphysical, it will not follow that therefore it must needs be abstruse, unintelligible, and akin to the jargon of the schools. I humbly conceive the foregoing reasoning, at least as to those things which are most material belonging to it, depends on no abstruse definitions or distinctions, or terms without a meaning, or of very ambiguous and undetermined signification, or any points of such abstraction and subtilty, as tends to involve the attentive understanding in clouds and darkness. There is no high degree of refinement and abstruse speculation, in determining that a thing is not before it is, and so cannot be the cause of itself; or that

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the first act of free choice, has not another act of free choice going before that, to excite or direct it, or in determining, that no choice is made, while the mind remains in a state of absolute indifference; that preference and equillibrium never coexist; and that therefore no choice is made in a state of liberty, consisting in indifference; and that so far as the Will is determined by motives, exhibited and operating previous to the act of the Will, so far it is not determined by the act of the Will itself; that nothing can begin to be, which before was not, without a cause, or some antecedent ground or reason, why it then begins to be; that effects depend on their causes, and are connected with them; that virtue is not the worse, nor sin the better, for the strength of inclination with which it is practised, and the difficulty which thence arises of doing otherwise; that when it is already infallibly known, that the thing will be, it is not a thing contingent whether it will ever be or no; or that it can be truly said, notwithstanding, that it is not necessary it should be, but it either may be, or may not be. And the like might be observed of many other things which belong to the foregoing reasoning.

If any shall still stand to it, that the foregoing reasoning is nothing but metaphysical sophistry; and that it must be so, that the seeming force of the arguments all depends on some fallacy, and while that is hid in the obscurity, which always attends a great degree of metaphysical abstraction and refinement; and shall be ready to say, "Here is indeed something that tends to confound the mind, but not to satisfy it; for, who can ever be truly satisfied in it, that men are fitly blamed or commended, punished or rewarded for those volitions which are not from themselves, and of whose existence they are not the causes? Men may refine as much as they please, and advance their abstract notions, and make out a thousand seeming contradictions, to puzzle our understandings; yet there can be no satisfaction in such doctrine as this; the natural sense of the mind of man will always resist it."*

* A certain noted author of the present age says, the arguments for necessity are nothing but *quibbling, or logomachy, using words without a meaning, or beg-*

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I humbly conceive, that such an objector, if he has capacity and humility and calmness of spirit, and sufficient impartiality, thoroughly to examine himself, will find that he knows not really what he would be at; and that indeed, his difficulty is nothing but a mere prejudice, from an inadvertent customary use of words, in a meaning that is not clearly understood, nor carefully reflected upon. Let the objector reflect again, if he has candor and patience enough, and does not scorn to be at the trouble of close attention in the affair. He would have a man's volition be from himself. Let it be from himself, most primarily and originally of any way conceivable; that is, from his own choice: How will that help the matter, as to his being justly blamed or praised, unless that choice itself be blame or praiseworthy; And how is the choice itself (an ill choice, for instance) blameworthy, according to these principles, unless that be from himself too, in the same manner;

ging the question. I do not know what kind of necessity any authors, he may have reference to, are advocates for; or whether they have managed their arguments well, or ill. As to the arguments I have made use of, if they are *quibbles* they may be shewn to be so: Such knots are capable of being untied, and the trick and cheat may be detected and plainly laid open. If this be fairly done, with respect to the grounds and reasons I have relied upon, I shall have just occasion, for the future, to be silent, if not to be ashamed of my argumentations. I am willing my proofs should be thoroughly examined; and if there be nothing but *begging the question*, or mere *logomachy*, or dispute of words, let it be made manifest, and shewn how the seeming strength of the argument depends on my using words without a meaning, or arises from the ambiguity of terms, or my making use of words in an indeterminate and unsteady manner; and that the weight of my reasons rests mainly on such a foundation; and then, I shall either be ready to retract what I have urged, and thank the man that has done the kind part, or shall be justly exposed for my obstinacy.

The same author is abundant in appealing, in this affair, from what he calls *logomachy and sophistry*, to *experience*. A person can experience only what passes in his own mind. But yet, as we may well suppose, that all men have the same human faculties; so a man may well argue from his own experience to that of others, in things that shew the nature of those faculties, and the manner of their operation. But then one has as good right to allege his experience, as another. As to my own experience, I find, that in innumerable things I can do as I will; that the motions of my body, in many respects,

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that is, from his own choice? But the original and first determining choice in the affair is not from his choice; his choice is not the cause of it. And if it be from himself some other way, and not from his choice, surely that will not help the matter: If it be not from himself of choice, then it is not from himself voluntarily; and if so, he is surely no more to blame, than if it were not from himself at all. It is a vanity, to pretend it is a sufficient answer to this, to say, that it is nothing but metaphysical refinement and subtilty, and so attended with obscurity and uncertainty.

If it be the natural sense of our minds, that what is blameworthy in a man must be from himself, then it doubtless is also, that it must be from something bad in himself, a bad choice, or bad disposition. But then our natural sense is, that this bad choice or disposition is evil in itself, and the man blameworthy for it, on its own account, without taking into our notion of its blameworthiness, another bad choice, or disposition going before this, from whence this arises; for that is a ridiculous absurdity, running us into an immediate con-

instantaneously follow the acts of my Will concerning those motions; and that my Will has some command of my thoughts; and that the acts of my Will are my own, i. e. that they are acts of my Will, the volitions of my own mind; or, in other words, that what I will, I will. Which, I presume, is the sum of what others experience in this affair. But as to finding by experience, that my Will is originally determined by itself; or that, my Will first choosing what volition there shall be, the chosen volition accordingly follows; and that this is the first rise of the determination of my Will in any affair; or that any volition rises in my mind contingently; I declare, I know nothing in myself, by experience, of this nature; and nothing that ever I experienced, carries the least appearance or shadow of any such thing, or gives me any more reason to suppose or suspect any such thing, than to suppose that my volitions existed twenty years before they existed. It is true, I find myself possessed of my volitions, before I can see the effectual power of any cause to produce them, (for the power and efficacy of the cause is not seen but by the effect) and this, for ought I know, may make some imagine, that volition has no cause, or that it produces itself. But I have no more reason from hence to determine any such thing, than I have to determine that I gave myself my own being, or that I came into being accidentally without a cause, because I first found myself possessed of being, before I had knowledge of a cause of my being.

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tradiction, which our natural sense of blameworthiness has nothing to do with, and never comes into the mind, nor is supposed in the judgment we naturally make of the affair. As was demonstrated before, natural sense does not place the moral evil of volitions and dispositions in the cause of them, but the nature of them. An evil thing's being FROM a man, or from something antecedent in him, is not essential to the original notion we have of blameworthiness; but it is its being the choice of the heart; as appears by this, that if a thing be from us, and not from our choice, it has not the nature of blameworthiness or ill desert, according to our natural sense. When a thing is FROM a man, in that sense, that it is from his Will or choice, he is to blame for it, because his Will is IN IT: So far as the Will is IN IT, blame is IN IT, and no further. Neither do we go any further in our notion of blame, to inquire whether the bad Will be from a bad Will: There is no consideration of the original of that bad Will; because, according to our natural apprehension, blame *originally consists in it*. Therefore a thing's being from a man, is a secondary consideration, in the notion of blame or ill desert. Because those things, in our *external* actions, are most properly said to be from us, which are from our choice; and no other *external* actions, but those that are *from us* in this sense, have the nature of blame; and they indeed, not so properly because they are *from us*, as because we are in them, i. e. our Wills are in them; not so much because they are from some *property* of ours, as because they are our *properties*.

However, all these external actions being truly *from us*, as their cause; and we being so used, in ordinary speech, and in the common affairs of life, to speak of men's actions and conduct that we see, and that affect human society, as deserving ill or well, as worthy of blame or praise; hence it is come to pass, that philosophers have incautiously taken all their measures of good and evil, praise and blame, from the dictates of common sense, about these *overt acts* of men; to the running of every thing into the most lamentable and dreadful confusion.

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And, therefore, I observe,

III. It is so far from being true (whatever may be pretended) that the proof of the doctrine which has been maintained, depends on certain abstruse, unintelligible, metaphysical terms and notions; and that the *Arminian* scheme, without needing such clouds and darkness for its defence, is supported by the plain dictates of common sense; that the very reverse is most certainly true, and that to a great degree. It is fact, that they, and not we, have confounded things with metaphysical, unintelligible notions and phrases; and have drawn them from the light of plain truth, into the gross darkness of abstruse, metaphysical propositions, and words without a meaning. Their pretended demonstrations depend very much on such unintelligible, metaphysical phrases, as, *selfdetermination*, and *sovereignty of the Will*; and the metaphysical sense they put on such terms, as *necessity*, *contingency*, *action*, *agency*, &c. quite diverse from their meaning as used in common speech; and which, as they use them, are without any consistent meaning or any manner of distinct, consistent ideas; as far from it as any of the abstruse terms and perplexed phrases of the peripatetic philosophers or the most unintelligible jargon of the schools, or the cant of the wildest fanatics. Yea, we may be bold to say, these metaphysical terms, on which they build so much, are what they use without knowing what they mean themselves; they are pure metaphysical sounds, without any ideas whatsoever in their minds to answer them; inasmuch as it has been demonstrated, that there cannot be any notion in the mind consistent with these expressions, as they pretend to explain them; because their explanations destroy themselves. No such notions as imply self-contradiction, and selfabolition, and this a great many ways, can subsist in the mind; as there can be no idea of a whole which is less than any of its parts, or of solid extension without dimensions, or of an effect which is before its cause.....*Arminians* improve these terms, as terms of art, and in their metaphysical meaning, to advance and establish those things which are contrary to common sense, in a high degree. Thus, instead of the plain, vulgar notion of liberty, which all man-

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kind, in every part of the face of the earth, and in all ages, have; consisting in opportunity to do as one pleases; they have introduced a new, strange liberty, consisting in indifference, contingence, and selfdetermination; by which they involve themselves and others in great obscurity, and manifold gross inconsistence. So, instead of placing virtue and vice, as common sense places them very much, in fixed bias and inclination, and greater virtue and vice in stronger and more established inclination; these, through their refinings and abstruse notions, suppose a liberty consisting in indifference, to be essential to all virtue and vice. So they have reasoned themselves, not by metaphysical distinctions, but metaphysical confusion, into many principles about moral agency, blame, praise, reward and punishment, which are, as has been shewn, exceeding contrary to the common sense of mankind; and perhaps to their own sense, which governs them in common life.

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CONCLUSION.

WHETHER the things which have been alleged, are liable to any tolerable answer in the way of calm, intelligible and strict reasoning, I must leave others to judge; but I am sensible they are liable to one sort of answer. It is not unlikely, that some, who value themselves on the supposed rational and generous principles of the modern, fashionable divinity, will have their indignation and disdain raised at the sight of this discourse, and on perceiving what things are pretended to be proved in it. And if they think it worthy of being read, or of so much notice as to say much about it, they may probably renew the usual exclamations, with additional vehemence and contempt, about the *fate of the heathen*, Hobbes' *necessity*, and *making men mere machines*; accumulating the terrible epithets of *fatal*, *unfrustrable*, *inevitable*, *irresistible*, &c. and it may be, with the addition of *horrid* and *blasphemous*; and perhaps much skill may be used to set forth things, which have been said, in colors which shall be shocking to the imaginations, and moving to the passions of those, who have either too little capacity, or too much confidence of the opinions they have imbibed, and contempt of the contrary, to try the matter by any serious and circumspect examination.*

* A writer, of the present age, whom I have several times had occasion to mention, speaks once and again of those who hold the doctrine of *necessity*, as scarcely worthy of the name of *philosophers*....I do not know, whether he has respect to any particular notion of necessity, that some may have maintained; and, if so, what doctrine of necessity it is that he means....Whether I am worthy of the name of a philosopher, or not, would be a question little to the present purpose. If any, and ever so many, should deny it, I should not think

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Or difficulties may be started and insisted on, which do not belong to the controversy; because, let them be more or less real, and hard to be resolved, they are not what are owing to any thing distinguishing of this scheme from that of the Arminians, and would not be removed nor diminished by renouncing the former, and adhering to the latter. Or some particular things may be picked out, which they may think will sound harshest in the ears of the generality; and these may be glossed and descanted on, with tart and contemptuous words; and from thence, the whole treated with triumph and insult.

It is easy to see, how the decision of most of the points in controversy, between *Calvinists* and *Arminians*, depends on the determination of this grand article concerning *the freedom of the Will, requisite to moral agency;* and that by clearing and establishing the *Calvinistic* doctrine in this point, the chief arguments are obviated, by which *Arminian* doctrines in general are supported, and the contrary doctrines demonstratively confirmed. Hereby it becomes manifest, that God's moral government over mankind, his treating them as moral agents, making them the objects of his commands, counsels, calls, warnings, expostulations, promises, threatenings, rewards and punishments, is not inconsistent with a *determining disposal* of all events, of every kind, throughout the universe, in his *providence;* either by positive efficiency, or permission. Indeed, such an *universal, determining Providence* infers some kind of necessity of all events, such a necessity as implies an infallible, previous fixedness of the futurity of the event; but no other necessity of moral events, or volitions of intelligent agents, is needful in order to this, than *moral necessity;* which

it worth the while to enter into a dispute on that question: Though at the same time I might expect, some better answer should be given to the arguments brought for the truth of the doctrine I maintain; and I might further reasonably desire, that it might be considered, whether it does not become those, who are truly worthy of the name of philosophers, to be sensible, that there is a difference between *argument* and *contempt;* yea, and a difference between the contemptibleness of the *person* that argues, and the inconclusiveness of the *arguments* he offers.

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does as much ascertain the futurity of the event, as any other necessity. But, as has been demonstrated, such a necessity is not at all repugnant to moral agency, and a reasonable use of commands, calls, rewards, punishments, &c. Yea, not only are objections of this kind against the doctrine of an universal *determining Providence*, removed by what has been said, but the truth of such a doctrine is demonstrated.

As it has been demonstrated, that the futurity of all future events is established by previous necessity, either natural or moral; so it is manifest that that the Sovereign Creator and Disposer of the world has ordered this necessity, by ordering his own conduct, either in designedly acting or forbearing to act. For, as the being of the world is from God, so the circumstances in which it had its being at first, both negative and positive, must be ordered by him, in one of these ways; and all the necessary consequences of these circumstances, must be ordered by him. And God's active and positive interpositions, after the world was created, and the consequences of these interpositions; also every instance of his forbearing to interpose, and the sure consequences of this forbearance, must all be determined according to his pleasure. And therefore every event, which is the consequence of any thing whatsoever, or that is connected with any foregoing thing or circumstance, either positive or negative, as the ground or reason of its existence, must be ordered of God; either by a designed efficiency and interposition, or a designed forbearing to operate or interpose. But, as has been proved, all events whatsoever are necessarily connected with something foregoing, either positive or negative, which is the ground of their existence: It follows, therefore, that the whole series of events is thus connected with something in the state of things, either positive or negative, which is original in the series; i. e. something which is connected with nothing preceding that, but God's own immediate conduct, either his acting or forbearing to act. From whence it follows, that as God designedly orders his own conduct, and its connected consequences, it must necessarily be, that he designedly orders all things.

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The things which have been said, obviate some of the chief objections of Arminians against the Calvinistic doctrine of the *total depravity and corruption of man's nature*, whereby his heart is wholly under the power of sin, and he is utterly unable, without the interposition of sovereign grace, savingly to love God, believe in Christ, or do any thing that is truly good and acceptable in God's sight. For the main objection against this doctrine is, that it is inconsistent with the freedom of man's Will, consisting in indifference and selfdetermining power; because it supposes man to be under a necessity of sinning, and that God requires things of him in order to his avoiding eternal damnation, which he is unable to do; and that this doctrine is wholly inconsistent with the sincerity of counsels, invitations, &c. Now, this doctrine supposes *no other necessity* of sinning, than a moral necessity; which, as has been shewn, does not at all excuse sin; and supposes *no other inability* to obey any command, or perform any duty, even the most spiritual and exalted, but a moral inability, which, as has been proved, does not excuse persons in the nonperformance of any good thing, or make them not to be the proper objects of commands, counsels and invitations. And moreover, it has been shewn that there is not, and never can be, either in existence, or so much as in idea, any such freedom of Will, consisting in indifference and selfdetermination, for the sake of which, this doctrine of original sin is cast out; and that no such freedom is necessary, in order to the nature of sin, and a just desert of punishment.

The things which have been observed, do also take off the main objections of Arminians against the doctrine of *efficacious grace*; and at the same time prove the grace of God in a sinner's conversion (if there be any grace or divine influence in the affair) to be *efficacious*, yea, and *irresistible* too, if by irresistible is meant that which is attended with a moral necessity, which it is impossible should even be violated by any resistance. The main objection of Arminians against this doctrine is, that it is inconsistent with their selfdetermining freedom of Will; and that it is repugnant to the nature of virtue, that it should be wrought in the heart by the deter-

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mining efficacy and power of another, instead of its being owing to a selfmoving power; that in that case, the good which is wrought, would not be *our* virtue, but rather God's virtue; because it is not the person in whom it is wrought, that is the determining author of it, but God that wrought it in him. But the things, which are the foundation of these objections, have been considered; and it has been demonstrated that the liberty of moral agents does not consist in self-determining power, and that there is no need of any such liberty in order to the nature of virtue, nor does it at all hinder but that the state or act of the Will may be the virtue of the subject, though it be not from selfdetermination, but the determination of an extrinsic cause; even so as to cause the event to be morally necessary to the subject of it. And as it has been proved, that nothing in the state or acts of the Will of man is contingent; but that, on the contrary, every event of this kind is necessary, by a moral necessity; and as it has also been now demonstrated, that the doctrine of an universal determining Providence, follows from that doctrine of necessity which was proved before; and so that God does decisively, in his Providence, order all the volitions of moral agents, either by positive influence or permission; and it being allowed, on all hands, that what God does in the affair of man's virtuous volitions, whether it be more or less, is by some positive influence, and not by mere permission, as in the affair of a sinful volition; if we put these things together, it will follow, that God's assistance or influence, must be determining and decisive, or must be attended with a moral necessity of the event; and so, that God gives virtue, holiness and conversion to sinners, by an influence which determines the effect, in such a manner, that the effect will infallibly follow by a moral necessity; which is what Calvinists mean by efficacious and irresistible grace.

The things which have been said, do likewise answer the chief objections against the doctrine of God's *universal* and *absolute decree*, and afford infallible proof of this doctrine; and of the doctrine of *absolute, eternal, personal election* in particular. The main objections against these doctrines are, that

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they infer a necessity of the volitions of moral agents, and of the future, moral state and acts of men, and so are not consistent with those eternal rewards and punishments, which are connected with conversion and impenitence; nor can be made to agree with the reasonableness and sincerity of the precepts, calls, counsels, warnings and expostulations of the word of God; or with the various methods and means of grace, which God uses with sinners, to bring them to repentance; and the whole of that moral government, which God exercises towards mankind; and that they infer an inconsistence between the *secret* and *revealed* Will of God, and make God the author of sin. But all these things have been obviated in the preceding discourse. And the certain truth of these doctrines, concerning God's eternal purposes, will follow from what was just now observed concerning God's universal Providence; how it infallibly follows from what has been proved, that God orders all events; and the volitions of moral agents amongst others by such a decisive disposal, that the events are infallibly connected with his disposal. For if God disposes all events, so that the infallible existence of the events is decided by his Providence, then he, doubtless, thus orders and decides things *knowingly*, and on *design*. God does not do what he does, nor order what he orders, accidentally or unawares; either *without* or *beside* his intention. And if there be a foregoing *design*, of doing and ordering as he does, this is the same with a *purpose* or *decree*. And as it has been shewn that nothing is new to God, in any respect, but all things are perfectly and equally in his view from eternity; hence it will follow, that his designs or purposes are not things formed anew, founded on any new views or appearances, but are all eternal purposes. And as it has been now shewn, how the doctrine of determining, efficacious grace certainly follows from things proved in the foregoing discourse; hence will necessarily follow the doctrine of *particular, eternal, absolute election*. For if men are made true saints, no otherwise than as God makes them so, and distinguishes them from others, by an efficacious power and influence of his, that decides and fixes the event; and God thus makes

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some saints, and not others, or design or purpose, and (as has been now observed) no designs of God are new; it follows, that God thus distinguished from others, all that ever become true saints, by his eternal design or decree. I might also shew how God's certain foreknowledge must suppose an absolute decree, and how such a decree can be proved to a demonstration from it, but that this discourse may not be lengthened out too much, that must be omitted for the present.

From these things it will inevitably follow, that however Christ in some sense may be said to *die for all*, and to redeem all visible Christians, yea, the whole world by his death; yet there must be something *particular* in the design of his death, with respect to such as he intended should actually be saved thereby. As appears by what has been now shewn, God has the actual salvation or redemption of a certain number in his proper, absolute design, and of a certain number only; and therefore such a design only can be prosecuted in any thing God does, in order to the salvation of men. God pursues a proper design of the salvation of the elect in giving Christ to die, and prosecutes such a design with respect to no other, most strictly speaking; for it is impossible that God should prosecute any other design than only such as he has; he certainly does not, in the highest propriety and strictness of speech, pursue a design that he has not. And, indeed, such a particularity and limitation of redemption will as infallibly follow, from the doctrine of God's foreknowledge, as from that of the decree. For it is as impossible, in strictness of speech, that God should prosecute a design, or aim at a thing, which He at the same time most perfectly knows will not be accomplished, as that he should use endeavors for that which is beside his decree.

By the things which have been proved, are obviated some of the main objections against the doctrine of the infallible and necessary *perseverance* of saints, and some of the main foundations of this doctrine are established. The main prejudices of Arminians against this doctrine seem to be these. They suppose such a necessary, infallible perseverance to be

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repugnant to the freedom of the Will: That it must be owing to man's own selfdetermining power, that he *first becomes* virtuous and holy; and so, in like manner, it must be left a thing contingent, to be determined by the same freedom of Will, whether he will *persevere* in virtue and holiness; and that otherwise his continuing stedfast in faith and obedience would not be his virtue, or at all praiseworthy and rewardable, nor could his perseverance be properly the matter of divine commands, counsels and promises, nor his apostacy be properly threatened, and men warned against it. Whereas we find all these things in Scripture: There we find stedfastness and perseverance in true Christianity, represented as the virtue of the saints, spoken of as praiseworthy in them, and glorious rewards promised to it; and also find that God makes it the subject of his commands, counsels and promises; and the contrary, of threatenings and warnings. But the foundation of these objections has been removed, in its being shewn that moral necessity and infallible certainty of events is not inconsistent with these things; and that as to freedom of Will, lying in the power of the Will to determine itself, there neither is any such thing, nor any need of it, in order to virtue, reward, commands, counsels, &c.

And as the doctrines of efficacious grace and absolute election do certainly follow from things which have been proved in the preceding discourse; so some of the main foundations of the doctrine of perseverance, are thereby established. If the beginning of true faith and holiness, and a man's becoming a true saint at first, does not depend on the selfdetermining power of the Will, but on the determining, efficacious grace of God; it may well be argued, that it is so also with respect to men's being continued saints, or persevering in faith and holiness. The conversion of a sinner being not owing to a man's selfdetermination, but to God's determination and eternal election, which is absolute and depending on the sovereign Will of God, and not on the free Will of man; as is evident from what has been said; and it being very evident from the Scriptures, that the eternal election which there is of saints to faith and holiness, is also

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an election of them to eternal salvation. Hence their appointment to salvation must also be absolute, and not depending on their contingent, selfdetermining Will. From all which it follows, that it is absolutely fixed in God's decree, that all true saints shall persevere to actual eternal salvation.

But I must leave all these things to the consideration of the fair and impartial reader; and when he has maturely weighed them, I would propose it to his consideration, whether many of the first reformers, and others that succeeded them, whom God in their day made the chief pillars of his church, and greatest instruments of their deliverance from error and darkness, and of the support of the cause of piety among them, have not been injured in the contempt with which they have been treated by many late writers, for their teaching and maintaining such doctrines as are commonly called *Calvinistic*. Indeed, some of these new writers, at the same time that they have represented the doctrines of these ancient and eminent divines as in the highest degree ridiculous, and contrary to common sense, in an ostentation of a very generous charity, have allowed that they were honest, wellmeaning men; yea, it may be some of them, as though it were in great condescension and compassion to them, have allowed that they did pretty well for the day in which they lived, and considering the great disadvantages they labored under; when at the same time, their manner of speaking has naturally and plainly suggested to the minds of their readers, that they were persons, who, through the lowness of their genius, and greatness of the bigotry with which their minds were shackled and thoughts confined, living in the gloomy caves of superstition, fondly embraced, and demurely and zealously taught the most absurd, silly, and monstrous opinions, worthy of the greatest contempt of gentlemen possessed of that noble and generous freedom of thought, which happily prevails in this age of light and inquiry. When, indeed, such is the case, that we might, if so disposed, speak as big words as they, and on far better grounds. And really all the *Arminians* on earth might be challenged with-

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out arrogance or vanity, to make these principles of theirs, wherein they mainly differ from their fathers, whom they so much despise, consistent with common sense; yea, and perhaps to produce any doctrine ever embraced by the blindest bigot of the church of Rome, or the most ignorant Musulman or extravagant enthusiast, that might be reduced to more demonstrable inconsistencies, and repugnancies to common sense, and to themselves; though their inconsistencies indeed may not lie so deep, or be so artfully veiled by a deceitful ambiguity of words, and an indeterminate signification of phrases. I will not deny, that these gentlemen, many of them, are men of great abilities, and have been helped to higher attainments in philosophy, than those ancient divines, and have done great service to the church of God in some respects; but I humbly conceive that their differing from their fathers with such magisterial assurance, in these points in divinity, must be owing to some other cause than superior wisdom.

It may also be worthy of consideration, whether the great alteration, which has been made in the state of things in our nation, and some other parts of the Protestant world, in this and the past age, by the exploding so generally Calvinistic doctrines, that is so often spoken of as worthy to be greatly rejoiced in by the friends of truth, learning and virtue, as an instance of the great increase of light in the Christian church; I say, it may be worthy to be considered, whether this be indeed a happy change, owing to any such cause as an increase of true knowledge and understanding in things of religion; or whether there is not reason to fear, that it may be owing to some worse cause.

And I desire it may be considered, whether the boldness of some writers may not be worthy to be reflected on, who have not scrupled to say, that if these and those things are true (which yet appear to be the demonstrable dictates of reason, as well as the certain dictates of the mouth of the Most High) then God is unjust and cruel, and guilty of manifest deceit and double dealing, and the like. Yea, some have gone so far, as confidently to assert, that if any book which

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pretends to be scripture, teaches such doctrines, that alone is sufficient warrant for mankind to reject it, as what cannot be the word of God....Some, who have not gone so far, have said, that if the scripture seems to teach any such doctrines, so contrary to reason, we are obliged to find out some other interpretation of those texts, where such doctrines seem to be exhibited. Others express themselves yet more modestly: They express a tenderness and religious fear, lest they should receive and teach any thing that should seem to reflect on God's moral character, or be a disparagement to his methods of administration, in his moral government; and therefore express themselves as not daring to embrace some doctrines, though they seem to be delivered in scripture, according to the more obvious and natural construction of the words. But indeed it would shew a truer modesty and humility, if they would more entirely rely on God's wisdom and discerning, who knows infinitely better than we, what is agreeable to his own perfections, and never intended to leave these matters to the decision of the wisdom and discerning of men; but by his own unerring instruction, to determine for us what the truth is; knowing how little our judgment is to be depended on, and how extremely prone, vain and blind men are, to err in such matters.

The truth of the case is, that if the scripture plainly taught the opposite doctrines, to those that are so much stumbled at, viz. the *Arminian* doctrine of free Will, and others depending thereon, it would be the greatest of all difficulties that attend the scriptures, incomparably greater than its containing any, even the most mysterious of those doctrines of the first reformers, which our late free thinkers have so superciliously exploded....Indeed, it is a glorious argument of the divinity of the holy scriptures, that they teach such doctrines, which in one age and another, through the blindness of men's minds, and strong prejudices of their hearts, are rejected, as most absurd and unreasonable, by the wise and great men of the world; which yet, when they are most carefully and strictly examined, appear to be exactly agreeable to the most demonstrable, certain and natural dictates of reason. By

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such things it appears, that the *foolishness of God is wiser than men*, and God does as is said in 1 Cor. i. 19, 20. "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; I will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise! Where is the scribe! Where is the disputer of this world! Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" And as it used to be in time past, so it is probable it will be in time to come, as it is there written, in verse 27, 28, 29. "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen: Yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." AMEN.

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REMARKS

ON THE ESSAYS ON THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALITY AND NATURAL RELIGION, IN A LETTER TO A MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

REVEREND SIR,

THE intimations you have given me of the use which has, by some, been made of what I have written on the *Freedom of the Will, &c.* to vindicate what is said on the subject of liberty and necessity, by the author of the *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion*, has occasioned my reading this author's essay on that subject, with particular care and attention. And I think it must be evident to every one, that has read both his *Essay* and my *Inquiry*, that our schemes are exceeding reverse from each other. The wide difference appears particularly in the following things.

This author supposes, that such a necessity takes place with respect to all men's actions, as is inconsistent with liberty,* and plainly denies that men have any liberty in acting. Thus in p. 168, after he had been speaking of the necessity of our determinations, as connected with motives, he concludes with saying, "In short, if motives are not under our power or direction, which is confessedly the fact, we can at bottom have——NO LIBERTY." Whereas, I have abundantly expressed it as my mind, that man, in his moral actions, has true liberty; and that the moral necessity, which universally takes place, is not in the least inconsistent with any thing that is properly called liberty, and with the utmost liberty that can be desired, or that can possibly exist or be conceived of†.

* P. 160, 161, 164, 165, and many other places.

† *Inquiry*, p. 38....43, 186, 187, 278...288, 300, 307, 326...335.

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I find that some are apt to think, that in that kind of moral necessity of men's volitions, which I suppose to be universal, at least some degree of liberty is denied; that though it be true I allow a sort of liberty, yet those who maintain a self-determining power in the Will, and a liberty of contingence and indifference, hold an higher sort of freedom than I do; but I think this is certainly a great mistake.

Liberty, as I have explained it, in p. 38, and other places, is *the power, opportunity, or advantage, that any one has to do as he pleases, or conducting* in any respect, *according to his pleasure;* without considering how his pleasure comes to be as it is. It is demonstrable, and, I think, has been demonstrated, that no necessity of men's volitions that I maintain, is inconsistent with this liberty; and I think it is impossible for any one to rise higher in his conceptions of liberty than this: If any imagine they desire higher, and that they conceive of a higher and greater liberty than this they are deceived, and delude themselves with confused ambiguous words, instead of ideas. If any one should here say, "Yes, I conceive of a freedom above and beyond the liberty a man has of conducting in any respect as he pleases, viz. a liberty of *choosing* as he pleases." Such an one, if he reflected, would either blush or laugh at his own instance. For, is not choosing as he pleases, conducting *in some respect*, according to his pleasure, and still without determining how he came by that pleasure? If he says, "Yes, I came by that pleasure by my own choice." If he be a man of common sense, by this time he will see his own absurdity; for he must needs see that his notion or conception, even of this liberty, does not contain any judgment or conception how he comes by that choice, which first determines his pleasure, or which originally fixed his own will respecting the affair. Or if any shall say, "That a man exercises liberty in this, even in determining his own choice, but not as he pleases, or not in consequence of any choice, preference, or inclination of his own, but by a determination arising contingently out of a state of absolute indifference;" this is not rising higher in his conception of liberty; as such a determination of the Will would not be a vol-

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untary determination of it. Surely he that places liberty in a power of doing something not according to his own choice, or from his choice, has not a higher notion of it, than he that places it in doing as he pleases, or acting from his own election. If there were a power in the mind to determine itself, but not by its choice or according to its pleasure, what advantage would it give? And what liberty, worth contending for, would be exercised in it? Therefore no *Arminian*, *Pelagian*, or *Epicurean*, can rise higher in his conceptions of liberty, than the notion of it which I have explained: Which notion is apparently, perfectly consistent with the whole of that necessity of men's actions, which I suppose takes place. And I scruple not to say, it is beyond all their wits to invent a higher notion, or form a higher imagination of liberty; let them talk of *sovereignty of the Will*, *selfdetermining power*, *selfmotion*, *selfdirection*, *arbitrary decision*, *liberty* ad utrumvis, *power of choosing differently in given cases*, &c. &c. as long as they will. It is apparent that these men, in their strenuous affirmation, and dispute about these things, aim at they know not what, fighting for something they have no conception of, substituting a number of confused, unmeaning words, instead of things, and instead of thoughts. They may be challenged clearly to explain what they would have: They never can answer the challenge.

The author of the *Essays*, through his whole *Essay on Liberty* and *Necessity*, goes on that supposition, that, in order to the being of real liberty, a man must have a freedom that is opposed to moral necessity; and yet he supposes, p. 175, that "such a liberty must signify a power in the mind of acting without and against motives, a power of acting without any view, purpose or design, and even of acting in contradiction to our own desires and aversions, and to all our principles of action; and is an absurdity altogether inconsistent with a rational nature. Now, who ever imagined such a liberty as this, a higher sort or degree of freedom, than a liberty of following one's own views and purposes, and acting agreeable to his own inclinations and passions? Who will ever reasonably suppose that liberty, which is an absurdity altogether in-

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consistent with a rational nature, to be a kind of liberty above that which is consistent with the nature of a rational, intelligent, designing agent?

The author of the *Essays* seems to suppose such a necessity to take place, as is inconsistent with some supposable *power of arbitrary choice*;* or that there is some liberty conceivable, whereby men's own actions might be more *properly in their power*,† and by which events might be more *dependent on ourselves*;‡ contrary to what I suppose to be evident in my *Inquiry*.§ What way can be imagined, of our actions being more *in our power*, *from ourselves*, or *dependent on ourselves*, than their being from our power to fulfil our own choice, to act from our own inclination, pursue our own views, and execute our own designs? Certainly, to be able to act thus, is as properly having our actions in our power, and dependent on ourselves, as a being liable to be the subjects of acts and events, contingently and fortuitously, *without desire, view, purpose or design, or any principle of action* within ourselves; as we must be acording to this author's own declared sense, if our actions are performed with that liberty that is opposed to moral necessity.

This author seems every where to suppose, that necessity, most properly so called, attends all men's actions; and that the terms *necessary*, *unavoidable*, *impossible*, &c. are equally applicable to the case of moral and natural necessity. In p. 173, he says, "The idea of necessary and unavoidable, equally agrees, both to moral and physical necessity." And in p. 184, "All things that fall out in the natural and moral world are alike necessary." P. 174, "This inclination and choice is unavoidably caused or occasioned by the prevailing motive. In this lies the necessity of our actions, that, in such circumstances, it was impossible we could act otherwise." He often expresses himself in like manner elsewhere, speaking in strong terms of men's actions as *unavoidable*, what they *cannot* forbear, having *no power* over their own actions, the

* P. 169. † P. 191, 195, 197, 205. ‡ P. 183. § P. 395, 396.

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order of them being *unalterably* fixed and *inseparably* linked together, &c.*

On the contrary, I have largely declared, that the connexion between antecedent things and consequent ones, which takes place with regard to the acts of men's Wills, which is called moral necessity, is called by the name of *necessity* improperly; and that all such terms as *must*, *cannot*, *impossible*, *unable*, *irresistible*, *unavoidable*, *invincible*, &c. when applied here, are not applied in their proper signification, and are either used nonsensically, and with perfect insignificance, or in a sense quite diverse from their original and proper meaning, and their use in common speech; and, that such a necessity as attends the acts of men's Wills, is more properly called *certainty*, than *necessity*; it being no other than the certain connexion between the subject and predicate of the proposition which affirms their existence.

Agreeably to what is observed in my *Inquiry*, I think it is evidently owing to a strong prejudice in person's minds, arising from an insensible, habitual perversion and misapplication of such like terms as *necessary*, *impossible*, *unable*, *unavoidable*, *invincible*, &c. that they are ready to think, that to suppose a certain connexion of men's volitions, without any foregoing motives or inclinations, or any preceding moral influence whatsoever, is truly and properly to suppose such a strong, irrefragable chain of causes and effects, as stands in the way of, and makes utterly vain, opposite desires and endeavors, like immovable and impenetrable mountains of brass; and impedes our liberty like walls of adamant, gates of brass, and bars of iron: Whereas, all such representations suggest ideas as far from the truth, as the east is from the west. Nothing that I maintain, supposes that men are at all hindered by any fatal necessity, from doing, and even willing and choosing as they please, with full freedom; yea with the highest degree of liberty that ever was thought of, or that ever could possibly enter into the heart of any man to conceive. I know it is in vain to endeavor to make some persons believe this, or at least

* P. 180, 188, 193, 194, 195, 197, 198, 199, 205, 206.

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fully and steadily to believe it; for if it be demonstrated to them, still the old prejudice remains, which has been long fixed by the use of the terms *necessary*, *must*, *cannot*, *impossible*, &c. the association with these terms of certain ideas, inconsistent with liberty, is not broken; and the judgment is powerfully warped by it; as a thing that has been long bent and grown stiff, if it be straightened, will return to its former curvity again and again.

The author of the *Essays* most manifestly supposes that if men had the truth concerning the real necessity of all their actions clearly in view, they would not appear to themselves, or one another, as at all praiseworthy or culpable, or under any moral obligation, or accountable for their actions;* which supposes, that men are not to be blamed or praised for any of their actions, and are not under any obligations, nor are truly accountable for any thing they do, by reason of this necessity; which is very contrary to what I have endeavored to prove, throughout the *third part* of my *Inquiry*. I humbly conceive it is there shewn, that this is so far from the truth, that the moral necessity of men's actions, which truly take place, is requisite to the being of virtue and vice, or any thing praiseworthy or culpable: That the liberty of indifference and contingence, which is advanced in opposition to that necessity, is inconsistent with the being of these; as it would suppose that men are not determined in what they do, by any virtuous or vicious principles, nor act from any motives, intentions or aims whatsoever; or have any end, either good or bad, in acting. And it is not remarkable, that this author should suppose, that, in order to men's actions truly having any desert, they must be performed *without any view, purpose, design, or desire*, or *any principle of action*, or any thing *agreeable to a rational nature?* As it will appear that he does, if we compare p. 206, 207, with p. 175.

The Author of the Essays supposes, that God has deeply implanted in man's nature, a strong and invincible apprehension or feeling, as he calls it, of a liberty and contingence, of

* P. 207, 209, and other places.

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his own actions, opposite to that necessity which truly attends them; and which in truth does not agree with real fact,* is not agreeable to strict, philosophic truth,† is contradictory to the truth of things,‡ and which truth contradicts,§ not tallying with the real plan; ‖ and that therefore such feelings are deceitful,¶ are in reality of the delusive kind.** He speaks of them as a wise delusion,†† as nice, artificial feelings, merely that conscience may have a commanding power;‡‡ meaning plainly, that these feelings are a cunning artifice of the Author of Nature, to make men believe they are free, when they are not.§§ He supposes that, by these feelings, the moral world has a disguised appearance.‖‖ And other things of this kind he says. He supposes that all selfapprobation, and all remorse of conscience, all commendation or condemnation of ourselves or others, all sense of desert, and all that is connected with this way of thinking, all the ideas which at present are suggested by the words *ought*, *should*, arise from this delusion, and would entirely vanish without it.¶¶

All which is very contrary to what I have abundantly insisted on and endeavored to demonstrate in my *Inquiry*, where I have largely shewn that it is agreeable to the natural sense of mankind, that the moral necessity or certainty that attends men's actions, is consistent with praise and blame, reward and punishment;*† and that it is agreeable to our natural notions, that moral evil, with its desert of dislike and abhorrence, and all its other illdeservings, consists in a certain deformity in the nature of the dispositions and acts of the heart, and not in the evil of something else, diverse from these, supposed to be their cause or occasion.*‡

I might well ask here, whether any one is to be found in the world of mankind, who is conscious to a sense or feeling, naturally and deeply rooted in his mind, that in order to a

* P. 200. † P. 152. ‡ P. 183. § P. 186. ‖ P. 205. ¶ P. 203, 204, 211. ** P. 183. †† P. 209. ‡‡ P. 211. §§ P. 153. ‖‖ 214. ¶¶ P. 160, 194, 199, 205, 206, 209. *† Inquiry, Part IV. Sect. 4, throughout. *‡ Idem, Part IV. Sect. 1, throughout, and p. 395 ....397.

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man's performing any action that is praise or blameworthy, he must exercise a liberty that implies and signifies a power of acting without any motive, view, design, desire or principle of action? For such a liberty, this author supposes that must be which is opposed to moral necessity, as I have already observed once and again. Supposing a man should actually do good, independent of desire, aim, inducement, principle or end, is it a dictate of invincible, natural sense, that his act is more meritorious or praiseworthy, than if he had performed it for some *good end*, and had been governed in it by *good principles* and *motives*? And so I might ask on the contrary, with respect to evil actions.*

The author of the *Essays* supposes that the liberty without necessity, which we have a natural feeling of, implies *contingence*; and speaking of this contingence, he sometimes calls it by the name of *chance*. And it is evident that his notion of it, or rather what he says about it, implies things happening *loosely*, *fortuitously*, *by accident*, and *without a cause*.† Now I conceive the slightest reflection may be sufficient to satisfy any one that such a contingence of men's actions, according to our natural sense, is so far from being essential to the morality or merit of those actions, that it would destroy it; and that, on the contrary, the dependence of our actions on such causes as inward inclinations, incitements and ends, is essential to the being of it. Natural sense teaches men, when they see any thing done by others of a good or evil tendency, to inquire what their intention was; what principles and views they were moved by, in order to judge how far they are to be justified or condemned; and not to determine, that in order to their being approved or blamed at all, the action must be performed altogether fortuitously, proceeding from nothing, arising from no cause. Concerning this matter, I have fully expressed my mind in the *Inquiry*.

If the liberty which we have a natural sense of as necessary to desert, consists in the mind's selfdetermination, without

* See this matter illustrated in my *Inquiry*, Part IV. Sect. 4. † P. 156.... 159, 177, 178, 181, 183....185.

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being determined by previous inclination or motive, then indifference is essential to it, yea, absolute indifference, as is observed in my *Inquiry*. But men naturally have no notion of any such liberty as this, as essential to the morality or demerit of their actions; but, on the contrary, such a liberty, if it were possible, would be inconsistent with our natural notions of desert, as is largely shewn in the *Inquiry*. If it be agreeable to natural sense, that men must be indifferent in determining their own actions, then, according to the same, the more they are determined by inclination, either good or bad, the less they have of desert: The more good actions are performed from good dispositions, the less praiseworthy; and the more evil deeds are from evil dispositions, the less culpable; and in general, the more men's actions are from their hearts, the less they are to be commended or condemned; which all must know is very contrary to natural sense.

Moral necessity is owing to the power and government of the inclination of the heart, either habitual or occasional, excited by motive; but according to natural and common sense, the more a man does any thing with full inclination of heart, the more is it to be charged to his account for his condemnation if it be an ill action, and the more to be ascribed to him for his praise, if it be good.

If the mind were determined to evil actions by contingence, from a state of indifference, then either there would be no fault in them, or else the fault would be in being so perfectly indifferent, that the mind was equally liable to a bad or good determination. And if this indifference be liberty, then the very essence of the blame or fault would lie in the liberty itself, or the wickedness would, primarily and summarily, lie in being a free agent. If there were no fault in being indifferent, then there would be no fault in the determination's being agreeable to such a state of indifference; that is, there could no fault be reasonably found with this, viz, that opposite determinations actually happen to take place *indifferently*, sometimes good and sometimes bad, as contingence governs and decides. And if it be a fault to be indifferent to good and evil, then such indifference is no indif-

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ference to good and evil, but is a determination to evil, or to a fault; and such an indifferent disposition would be an evil, faulty disposition, tendency or determination of mind. So inconsistent are these notions of liberty, as essential to praise or blame.

The author of the *Essays* supposes men's natural, delusive sense of a liberty of contingence, to be in truth, the foundation of all the labor, care and industry of mankind;* and that if men's *practical ideas had been formed on the plan of universal necessity, the* ignava ratio, *the inactive doctrine of the Stoics, would have followed; and that there would have been no* ROOM *for forethought about futurity, or any sort of industry and care*;† plainly implying, that in this case men would see and know that all their industry and care signified, nothing was in vain and to no purpose, or of no benefit; events being fixed in an irrefragable chain, and not at all depending on their care and endeavor; as he explains himself, particularly in the instance of men's use of means to prolong life;‡ not only very contrary to what I largely maintain in my *Inquiry*, but also very inconsistently with his own scheme, in what he supposes of the ends for which God has so deeply implanted this deceitful feeling in man's nature; in which he manifestly supposes men's care and industry not to be in vain and of no benefit, but of great use, yea, of absolute necessity, in order to the obtaining the most important ends and necessary purposes of human life, and to fulfil the ends of action to the best advantage, as he largely declares. Now, how shall these things be reconciled? That if men had *a clear view of real truth*, they would see that there was *no room* for their care and industry, because they would see it to be in vain, and of no benefit; and yet that God, by having a clear view of real truth, sees that their being excited to care and industry, will be of excellent use to mankind, and greatly for the benefit of the world, yea, absolutely necessary in order to it; and that therefore the great wisdom and

* P. 184. † P. 189. ‡ P. 184, 185. § P. 188....192, and in many other places.

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goodness of God to men appears, in artfully contriving to put them on care and industry for their good, which good could not be obtained without them; and yet both these things are maintained at once, and in the same sentences and words by this author. The very reason he gives, why God has put this deceitful feeling into men, contradicts and destroys itself. That God in his great goodness to men gave them such a deceitful feeling, because it was very useful and necessary for them; and greatly for their benefit, or excites them to care and industry for their own good, which care and industry is useful and necessary to that end; and yet the very thing that this great benefit of care and industry is given as a reason for, is God's deceiving men in this very point, in making them think their care and industry to be of great benefit to them, when indeed it is of none at all; and if they saw the real truth, they would see all their endeavors to be wholly useless, that there was *no room* for them, and that the event does not at all *depend* upon them.*

And besides, what this author says, plainly implies (as appears by what has been already observed) that it is necessary men should be deceived, by being made to believe that future events are contingent, and their own future actions free, with such a freedom, as signifies that their actions are not the fruit of their own desires or designs, but altogether contingent, fortuitous, and without a cause. But how should a notion of liberty, consisting in accident or loose chance, encourage care and industry? I should think it would rather entirely discourage every thing of this nature. For surely, if our actions do not depend on our desires and designs, then they do not depend on our endeavors, flowing from our desires and designs. This author himself seems to suppose, that if men had, indeed, such a liberty of contingence, it would render all endeavors to determine or move men's future volitions vain; he says, that in this case *to exhort, to instruct, to promise, or to threaten, would be to no purpose.* Why? Because, (as he himself gives the reason) *then our*

* P. 188, 189, &c.

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Will would be capricious and arbitrary, and we should be thrown loose altogether, and our arbitrary power could do us good or ill only by accident. But if such a loose, fortuitous state would render vain other endeavors upon us, for the same reason would it make useless our endeavors on ourselves; for events that are truly contingent and accidental, and altogether loose from, and independent of, all foregoing causes, are independent on every foregoing cause within ourselves, as well as in others.

I suppose that it is so far from being true, that our minds are naturally possessed with a notion of such liberty as this, so strongly that it is impossible to root it out; that indeed men have no such notion of liberty at all, and that it is utterly impossible, by any means whatsoever, to implant or introduce such a notion into the mind. As no such notions as imply selfcontradiction and selfabolition can subsist in the mind, as I have shewn in my *Inquiry*, I think a mature, sensible consideration of the matter, sufficient to satisfy any one, that even the greatest and most learned advocates themselves for liberty of indifference and selfdetermination, have no such notion; and that indeed they mean something wholly inconsistent with, and directly subversive of, what they strenuously affirm, and earnestly contend for. By a man's having a power of determining his own Will, they plainly mean a power of determining his Will, as he pleases, or as he chooses; which supposes that the mind has a choice, prior to its going about to confirm any action or determination to it. And if they mean that they determine even the original or prime choice, by their own pleasure or choice, as the thing that causes and directs it; I scruple not most boldly to affirm, that they speak they know not what, and that of which they have no manner of idea, because no such contradictory notion can come into, or have a moment's subsistence in the mind of any man living as an original or first choice being caused, or brought into being, by choice. After all, they say they have no higher or other conception of liberty, than that vulgar notion of it, which I contend for, viz. a man's having power or opportunity to do as he chooses; or if they had a notion that every act of

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choice was determined by choice, yet it would destroy their notion of the contingence of choice; for then no one act of choice would arise contingently, or from a state of indifference, but every individual act, in all the series, would arise from foregoing bias or preference, and from a cause predetermining and fixing its existence, which introduces at once such a chain of causes and effects, each preceding link decisively fixing the following, as they would by all means avoid.

And such kind of delusion and selfcontradiction as this, does not arise in men's minds by nature; it is not owing to any natural feeling which God has strongly fixed in the mind and nature of man; but to false philosophy, and strong prejudice, from a deceitful abuse of words. It is *artificial*, not in the sense of the author of the *Essays*, supposing it to be a deceitful artifice of God; but artificial as opposed to natural, and as owing to an artificial, deceitful management of terms, to darken and confound the mind. Men have no such thing when they first begin to exercise reason; but must have a great deal of time to blind themselves, with metaphysical confusion, before they can embrace, and rest in such definitions of liberty as are given, and imagine they understand them.

On the whole, I humbly conceive, that whosoever will give himself the trouble of weighing what I have offered to consideration in my *Inquiry*, must be sensible, that such a moral necessity of men's actions as I maintain, is not at all inconsistent with any liberty that any creature has, or can have, as a free, accountable, moral agent, and subject of moral government; and that this moral necessity is so far from being inconsistent with praise and blame, and the benefit and use of men's own care and labor, that, on the contrary, it implies the very ground and reason, why men's actions are to be ascribed to them as their own, in that manner as to infer desert, praise and blame, approbation and remorse of conscience, reward and punishment; and that it establishes the moral system of the universe, and God's moral government, in every respect, with the proper use of motives, exhortations, commands, counsels, promises, and threatenings; and the use and benefit

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of endeavors, care and industry; and that therefore there is no need that the strict philosophic truth should be at all concealed from men; no danger in *contemplation* and *profound discovery* in these things. So far from this, that the truth in this matter is of vast importance, and extremely needful to be known; and that the more clearly and perfectly the real fact is known, and the more constantly it is in view, the better; and particularly, that the clear and full knowledge of that, which is the true system of the universe, in these respects, would greatly establish the doctrines which teach the true Christian scheme of Divine Administration in the city of God, and the gospel of Jesus Christ, in its most important articles; and that these things never can be well established, and the opposite errors, so subversive of the whole gospel, which at this day so greatly and generally prevail, be well confuted, or the arguments by which they are maintained, answered, till these points are settled. While this is not done, it is, to me, beyond doubt, that the friends of those great gospel truths will but poorly maintain their controversy with the adversaries of those truths. They will be obliged often to dodge, shuffle, hide, and turn their backs; and the latter will have a strong fort, from whence they never can be driven, and weapons to use, which those whom they oppose will find no shield to screen themselves from; and they will always puzzle, confound, and keep under the friends of sound doctrine, and glory, and vaunt themselves in their advantage over them; and carry their affairs with an high hand, as they have done already for a long time past.

I conclude, sir, with asking your pardon for troubling you with so much said in vindication of myself from the imputation of advancing a scheme of necessity, of a like nature with that of the author of the *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion*. Considering that what I have said is not only in vindication of myself, but, as I think, of the most important articles of moral philosophy and religion; I trust in what I know of your candor, that you will excuse,

Your obliged friend and brother,

JOHNATHAN EDWARDS.

STOCKBRIDGE, *July*, 25, 1757.

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MISCELLANEOUS

OBSERVATIONS

CONCERNING THE

DIVINE DECREES IN GENERAL,

AND

ELECTION IN PARTICULAR.

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MISCELLANEOUS

OBSERVATIONS.

Concerning the Divine Decrees *in general, and* Election *in particular.*

§ 1. WHETHER God has decreed all things that ever came to pass or not, all that own the being of a God, own that he knows all things beforehand. Now, it is selfevident, that if he knows all things beforehand, he either doth approve of them, or he doth not approve of them; that is, he either is willing they should be, or he is not willing they should be. But to will that they should be, is to decree them.

§ 2. The Arminians ridicule the distinction between the secret and revealed will of God, or, more properly expressed, the distinction between the decree and law of God; because we say he may decree one thing, and command another. And so, they argue, we hold a contrariety in God, as if one will of his contradicted another. However, if they will call this a contradiction of wills, we know that there is such a thing; so that it is the greatest absurdity to dispute about it. We and they know it was God's secret will, that Abraham should not sacrifice his son Isaac; but yet his command was, that he should do it. We know that God willed, that Pharaoh's heart should be hardened; and yet, that the hardness of his heart was sin. We know that God willed the Egyptians should hate God's people: Psal. cv. 25. "He turned their heart to hate his people, and deal subtilly with his servants." We know that it was God's will, that Absalom should lie with Da-

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vid's wives; 2 Sam. xii. 11. "Thus saith the Lord, I will raise up this evil against thee, out of thine own house; and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor; and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun." We know that God willed that Jeroboam and the ten tribes should rebel. The same may be said of the plunder of the Babylonians; and other instances might be given. The scripture plainly tells us, that God wills to harden some men, Rom. ix. 18. That he willed that Christ should be killed by men, &c.

§ 3. It is most certain, that if there are any things so contingent, that there is an equal possibility of their being or not being, so that they may be, or they may not be; God foreknows from all eternity that they may be, and also that they may not be. All will grant that we need no revelation to teach us this. And furthermore, if God knows all things that are to come to pass, he also foreknows whether those contingent things are to come to pass or no, at the same time that they are contingent, and that they may or may not come to pass. But what a contradiction is it to say, that God knows a thing will come to pass, and yet at the same time knows that it is contingent whether it will come to pass or no; that is, he certainly knows it will come to pass, and yet certainly knows it may not come to pass? What a contradiction is it to say, that God certainly foreknew that Judas would betray his master, or Peter deny him, and yet certainly knew that it might be otherwise, or certainly knew that he might be deceived? I suppose it will be acknowledged by all, that for God certainly to know a thing will be, and yet certainly to know that it may not be, is the same thing as certainly to know that he may be deceived. I suppose it will also be acknowledged, that certainly to know a thing, and also at the same time to know that we may be deceived in it, is the same thing as certainly to know it, and certainly to know that we are uncertain of it, or that we do not certainly know it; and that is the same thing as certainly to know it, and not certain-

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ly to know it at the same time; which we leave to be considered, whether it be not a contradiction.

§ 4. The meaning of the word *absolute*, when used about the decrees, wants to be stated. It is commonly said, God decrees nothing upon a foresight of any thing in the creature; as this, they say, argues imperfection in God; and so it does, taken in the sense that they commonly intend it. But nobody, I believe, will deny but that God decrees many things that he would not have decreed, if he had not foreknown and foredetermined such and such other things. What we mean, we completely express thus....That God decrees all things harmoniously, and in excellent order, one thing harmonizes with another, and there is such a relation between all the decrees, as makes the most excellent order. Thus God decrees rain in drought, because he decrees the earnest prayers of his people; or thus, he decrees the prayers of his people, because he decrees rain. I acknowledge, to say, *God decrees a thing because*, is an improper way of speaking; but not more improper than all our other ways of speaking about God. God decrees the latter event, because of the former, no more, than he decrees the former, because of the latter. But this is what we mean....When God decrees to give the blessing of rain, he decrees the prayers of his people; and when he decrees the prayers of his people for rain, he very commonly decrees rain; and thereby there is an harmony between these two decrees, of rain, and the prayers of God's people. Thus also, when he decrees diligence and industry, he decrees riches and prosperity; when he decrees prudence, he often decrees success; when he decrees striving, then he often decrees the obtaining the kingdom of heaven; when he decrees the preaching of the gospel, then he decrees the bringing home of souls to Christ; when he decrees good natural faculties, diligence and good advantages, then he decrees learning; when de decrees summer, then he decrees the growing of plants; when he decrees conformity to his Son, then he decrees calling; when he decrees calling, then he decrees justification; and when he decrees justification, then he decrees

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everlasting glory. Thus, all the decrees of God are harmonious; and this is all that can be said for or against absolute or conditional decrees. But this I say, it is as improper to make one decree a condition of another, as to make the other a condition of that: But there is a harmony between both.

§ 5. It cannot be any injustice in God to determine who is certainly to sin, and so certainly to be damned. For, if we suppose this impossibility, that God had not determined any thing, things would happen as fatally as they do now. For, as to such an absolute contingency, which they attribute to man's will, calling it the sovereignty of the will; if they mean, by this sovereignty of will, that a man can will as he wills, it is perfect nonsense, and the same as if they should spend abundance of time and pains, and be very hot at proving, that a man can will when he doth will; that is, that it is possible for that to be, which is. But if they mean, that there is a perfect contingency in the will of man, that is, that it happens merely by chance that a man wills such a thing, and not another, it is an impossibility and contradiction, that a thing should be without any cause or reason, and when there was every way as much cause why it should not have been. Wherefore, seeing things do unavoidably go fatally and necessarily, what injustice is it in the Supreme Being, seeing it is a contradiction that it should be otherwise, to decree that they should be as they are?

§ 6. Contingency, as it is holden by some, is at the same time contradicted by themselves, if they hold foreknowledge. This is all that follows from an absolute, unconditional, irreversible decree, that it is impossible but that the things decreed should be. The same exactly follows from foreknowledge, that it is absolutely impossible but that the thing certainly foreknown should precisely come to pass.

If it will universally hold, that none can have absolutely perfect and complete happiness, at the same time that any thing is otherwise than he desires at that time it should be; or thus, if it be true, that he has not absolute, perfect, infinite

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and all possible happiness now, who has not now all that he wills to have now: Then God, if any thing is now otherwise than he wills to have it now, is not now absolutely, perfectly and infinitely happy. If God is infinitely happy now, then every thing is now, as God would have it to be now; if every thing, then those things that are contrary to his commands. If so, it is not ridiculous to say, that things which are contrary to God's commands, are yet in a sense agreeable to his will. Again, let it be considered, whether it be not certainly true, that every one that can with infinite ease have a thing done, and yet will not have it done, wills it not; that is, whether or no he that wills not to have a thing done, properly wills not to have a thing done. For example, let the thing be this, that Judas should be faithful to his Lord; whether it be not true, that if God could with infinite ease have it done as he would, but would not have it done as he could, if he would, it be not proper to say, that God would not have it be, that Judas should be faithful to his Lord.

§ 7. They say, to what purpose are praying and striving, and attending on means, if all was irreversibly determined by God before? But, to say that all was determined before these prayers and strivings, is a very wrong way of speaking, and begets those ideas in the mind, which correspond with no realities with respect to God. The decrees of our everlasting state were not before our prayers and strivings; for these are as much present with God from all eternity, as they are the moment they are present with us. They are present as part of his decrees, or rather as the same; and they did as really exist in eternity, with respect to God, as they exist in time, and as much at one time as another. Therefore, we can no more fairly argue, that these will be in vain, because God has foredetermined all things, than we can, that they would be in vain if they existed as soon as the decree, for so they do, inasmuch as they are a part of it.

§ 8. That we should say, that God has decreed every action of men, yea, every action that is sinful, and every circum-

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stance of those actions; that he predetermines that they shall be in every respect as they afterwards are; that he determines that there shall be such actions, and just so sinful as they are; and yet that God does not decree the actions that are sinful, as sin, but decrees them as good, is really consistent. For we do not mean, by decreeing an action *as sinful*, the same as decreeing an action so that it shall be sinful; but by decreeing an action *as sinful*, I mean decreeing it for the sake of the sinfulness of the action. God decrees that they shall be sinful, for the sake of the good that he causes to arise from the sinfulness thereof; whereas man decrees them for the sake of the evil that is in them.

§ 9. When a distinction is made between God's revealed will and his secret will, or his will of command and decree, will is certainly in that distinction taken in two senses. His will of decree, is not his will in the same sense as his will of command is. Therefore, it is no difficulty at all to suppose, that the one may be otherwise than the other: His will in both senses is his inclination. But when we say he wills virtue, or loves virtue, or the happiness of his creature; thereby is intended, that virtue, or the creature's happiness, absolutely and simply considered, is agreeable to the inclination of his nature. His will of decree, is his inclination to a thing, not as to that thing absolutely and simply, but with respect to the universality of things, that have been, are, or shall be. So God, though he hates a thing as it is simply, may incline to it with reference to the universality of things. Though he hates sin in itself, yet he may will to permit it, for the greater promotion of holiness in this universality, including all things, and at all times. So, though he has no inclination to a creature's misery, considered absolutely, yet he may will it, for the greater promotion of happiness in this universality. God inclines to excellency, which is harmony, but yet he may incline to suffer that which is unharmonious in itself, for the promotion of universal harmony, or for the promoting of the harmony that there is in the universality, and making it shine the brighter. And thus it must needs be, and no hypothesis

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whatsoever will relieve a man, but that he must own these two wills of God. For all must own, that God sometimes wills not to hinder the breach of his own commands, because he does not in fact hinder it. He wills to permit sin, it is evident, because he *does* permit it. None will say that God himself does what he does not *will* to do. But you will say, God wills to permit sin, as he wills the creature should be left to his freedom; and if he should hinder it, he would offer violence to the nature of his own creature. I answer, this comes nevertheless to the very thing that I say. You say, God does not will sin absolutely; but rather than alter the law of nature and the nature of free agents, he wills it. He wills what is contrary to excellency in some particulars, for the sake of a more general excellency and order. So that this scheme of the Arminians does not help the matter.

§ 10. It is a proper and excellent thing for infinite glory to shine forth; and for the same reason, it is proper that the shining forth of God's glory should be complete; that is, that all parts of his glory should shine forth, that every beauty should be proportionably effulgent, that the beholder may have a proper notion of God. It is not proper that one glory should be exceedingly manifested, and another not at all; for then the effulgence would not answer the reality. For the same reason it is not proper that one should be manifested exceedingly, and another but very little. It is highly proper that the effulgent glory of God should answer his real excellency; that the splendor should be answerable to the real and essential glory, for the same reason that it is proper and excellent for God to glorify himself at all. Thus it is necessary, that God's awful majesty, his authority and dreadful greatness, justice and holiness, should be manifested. But this could not be, unless sin and punishment had been decreed; so that the shining forth of God's glory would be very imperfect, both because these parts of divine glory would not shine forth as the others do, and also the glory of his goodness, love and holiness would be faint without them; nay, they could scarcely shine forth at all. If it were not ri-

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that God should decree and permit and punish sin, there could be no manifestation of God's holiness in hatred of sin, or in shewing any preference, in his providence, of godliness before it. There would be no manifestation of God's grace or true goodness, if there was no sin to be pardoned, no misery to be saved from. How much happiness soever he bestowed, his goodness would not be so much prized and admired, and the sense of it not so great, as we have elsewhere shown. We little consider how much the sense of good is heightened by the sense of evil, both moral and natural. And as it is necessary that there should be evil, because the display of the glory of God could not but be imperfect and incomplete without it, so evil is necessary, in order to the highest happiness of the creature, and the completeness of that communication of God, for which he made the world; because the creature's happiness consists in the knowledge of God and sense of his love. And if the knowledge of him be imperfect, the happiness of the creature must be proportionably imperfect; and the happiness of the creature would be imperfect upon another account also; for, as we have said, the sense of good is comparatively dull and flat, without the knowledge of evil.

§ 11. It is owned, that God did choose men to eternal life, upon a foresight of their faith. But then, here is the question, whether God decreed that faith, and chose them that they should believe.

§ 12. The sin of crucifying Christ being foreordained of God in his decree, and ordered in his providence, of which we have abundant evidence from the nature of the thing, and from the great ends God had to accomplish by means of this wicked act of crucifying Christ; it being, as it were, the cause of all the decrees, the greatest of all decreed events, and that on which all other decreed events depend as their main foundation; being the main thing in that greatest work of God, the work of redemption, which is the end of all other works; and it being so much prophesied of, and so plainly

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spoken of, as being done according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; I say, seeing we have such evidence that this sin is foreordained in God's decrees, and ordered in providence, and it being, as it were, the head sin, and representative of the sin of men in general; hence is a clear argument, that all the sins of men are foreordained and ordered by a wise providence.

§ 13. It is objected against the absolute decrees respecting the future actions of men, and especially the unbelief of sinners, and their rejection of the gospel, that this does not consist with the sincerity of God's calls and invitations to such sinners; as he has willed, in his eternal secret decree, that they should never accept of those invitations. To which I answer, that there is that in God, respecting the acceptance and compliance of sinners, which God knows will never be, and which he has decreed never to cause to be, in which, though it be not just the same with our desiring and wishing for that which will never come to pass, yet there is nothing wanting but what would imply imperfection in the case. There is all in God that is good, and perfect, and excellent in our desires and wishes for the conversion and salvation of wicked men. As, for instance, there is a love to holiness, absolutely considered, or an agreeableness of holiness to his nature and will; or, in other words, to his natural inclination. The holiness and happiness of the creature, absolutely considered, are things that he loves. These things are infinitely more agreeable to his nature than to ours. There is all in God that belongs to our desire of the holiness and happiness of unconverted men and reprobates, excepting what implies imperfection. All that is consistent with infinite knowledge, wisdom, power, selfsufficience, infinite happiness and immutability. Therefore, there is no reason that his absolute prescience, or his wise determination and ordering what is future, should hinder his expressing this disposition of his nature, in like manner as we are wont to express such a disposition in ourselves, viz. by calls and invitations, and the like.

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The disagreeableness of the wickedness and misery of the creature, absolutely considered, to the nature of God, is all that is good in pious and holy men's lamenting the past misery and wickedness of men. Their lamenting those, is good no farther than it proceeds from the disagreeableness of those things to their holy and good nature. This is also all that is good in wishing for the future holiness and happiness of men. And there is nothing wanting in God, in order to his having such desires and such lamentings, but imperfection; and nothing is in the way of his having them, but infinite perfection; and therefore it properly, naturally and necessarily came to pass, that when God, in the manner of existence, came down from his infinite perfection, and accommodated himself to our nature and manner, by being made man, as he was, in the person of Jesus Christ, he really desired the conversion and salvation of reprobates, and lamented their obstinacy and misery; as when he beheld the city Jerusalem, and wept over it, saying, "O Jerusalem," &c. In the like manner, when he comes down from his infinite perfection, though not in the manner of being, but in the manner of manifestation, and accommodates himself to our nature and manner, in the manner of expression, it is equally natural and proper that he should express himself as though he desired the conversion and salvation of reprobates, and lamented their obstinacy and misery.

§ 14. Maxim 1. There is no such thing *truly* as any pain or grief, or trouble in God.

Maxim 2. Hence it follows that there is no such thing as any real disappointment in God, or his being really crossed in his will, or things going contrary to his will; because, according to the notion of *will*, to have one's will, is agreeable and pleasing; for it is the notion of being pleased or suited, to have things as we will them to be; and so, on the other hand, to have things contrary to one's will, is disagreeable, troublesome or uncomfortable. Job xxiii. 13. "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, that he doth."

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In the first place, I lay this down, which I suppose none will deny, that as to God's own actions, God decrees them, or purposes them beforehand. For none will be so absurd as to say that God acts without intentions, or without designing to act, or that he forbears to act, without intending to forbear. 2dly. That whatsoever God intends or purposes, he intends and purposes from all eternity, and that there are no new purposes or intentions in God. For, if God sometimes begins to intend what he did not intend before, then two things will follow.

1. That God is not omniscient. If God sometimes begins to design what he did not design before, it must of necessity be for want of knowledge, or for want of knowing things before as he knows them now, for want of having exactly the same views of things. If God begins to intend what he did not before intend, it must be because he now sees reasons to intend it, that he did not see before; or that he has something new, objected to his understanding, to influence him.

2. If God begins to intend or purpose things that he did not intend before, then God is certainly mutable, and then he must in his own mind and will, be liable to succession and change; for wherever there are new things, there is succession and change. Therefore, I shall take these two things for positions granted and supposed in this controversy, viz. that as to God's own actions and forbearings to act, he decrees and purposes them beforehand; and that whatsoever God designs or purposes, he purposes from all eternity, and thus decrees from all eternity all his own actions, and forbearings to act.

Coroll. Hence God decrees from all eternity, to permit all the evil that ever he does permit; because God's permitting is God's forbearing to act or to prevent.

§ 15. It can be made evident by reason, that nothing can come to pass, but what it is the will and pleasure of God should come to pass. This may be argued from the infinite happiness of God. For every being had rather things should go

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according to his will, than not; because, if he had not rather, then it is not his will. It is a contradiction to say, he wills it, and yet does not choose it, or had not rather it should be so than not. But, if God had rather things should be according to his will than not, then, if a thing fall out otherwise than he hath willed, he meets with a cross; because, on this supposition, he had rather it should have been otherwise, and therefore he would have been better pleased if the thing had been otherwise. It is contrary to what he chose, and therefore it is of necessity that he must be displeased. It is of necessity that every being should be pleased, when a thing is as he chooses, or had rather it should be. It is a contradiction to suppose otherwise. For it is the very notion of being pleased, to have things agreeable to one's pleasure. For the very same reason, every being is crossed, or it is unpleasing to him, when a thing is, that he chose, and had rather should not have been. For it is the very notion of a thing's being cross or unpleasing to any, that it is contrary to his pleasure.

But if God can meet with crosses and things unpleasing to him, then he is not perfectly and unchangeably happy. For wherever there is any unpleasedness or unpleasantness, it must, of necessity, in a degree diminish the happiness of the subject. Where there is any cross to a being's choice, there is something contrary to happiness. Wherever there is any unpleasedness, there is something contrary to pleasure, and which consequently diminishes pleasure. It is impossible any thing should be plainer than this.

§ 16. The commands and prohibitions of God are only significations of our duty and of his nature. It is acknowledged that sin is, in itself considered, infinitely contrary to God's nature; but it does not follow, but that it may be the pleasure of God to permit it, for the sake of the good that he will bring out of it. God can bring such good out of that, which in itself is contrary to his nature, and which, in itself considered, he abhors, as may be very agreeable to his nature, and when sin is spoken of as contrary to the will of

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God, it is contrary to his will, considered only as in itself. As man commits it, it is contrary to God's will; for men act in committing it with a view to that which is evil. But as God permits it, it is not contrary to God's will; for God in permitting it has respect to the great good that he will make it an occasion of. If God respected sin as man respects it in committing it, it would be exceedingly contrary to his will; but considered as God decrees to permit it, it is not contrary to God's will. To give an instance....The crucifying of Christ was a great sin; and as men committed it, it was exceedingly hateful and highly provoking to God. Yet upon many great considerations it was the will of God that it should be done. Will any body say that it was not the will of God that Christ should be crucified? Acts iv. 28. "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

§ 17. Sin is an evil, yet the futurition of sin, or that sin should be future, is not an evil thing. Evil is an evil thing, and yet it may be a good thing that evil should be in the world. There is certainly a difference between the thing itself existing, and its being an evil thing that ever it came into existence. As, for instance, it might be an evil thing to crucify Christ, but yet it was a good thing that the crucifying of Christ came to pass. As men's act, it was evil, but as God ordered it, it was good. Who will deny but that it may be so that evil's coming to pass may be an occasion of a greater good than that is an evil, and so of there being more good in the whole, than if that evil had not come to pass? And if so, then it is a good thing that that evil comes to pass. When we say the thing is an evil thing in itself, then we mean that it is evil, considering it only within its own bounds. But when we say that it is a good thing that even it came to pass, then we consider the thing as a thing among events, or as one thing belonging to the series of events, and as related to the rest of the series. If a man should say that it was a good thing that ever it happened that Joseph's brethren sold him into Egypt, or that it was a good thing that ever it came to pass that

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Pope Leo X. sent out indulgences for the commission of future sins, nobody would understand a man thus expressing himself, as justifying these acts.

It implies no contradiction to suppose that an act may be an evil act, and yet that it is a good thing, that such an act should come to pass. A man may have been a bad man, and yet it may be a good thing that there has been such a man. This implies no contradiction; because it implies no contradiction to suppose that there being such a man may be an occasion of there being more good in the whole, than there would have been otherwise. So it no more implies a contradiction to suppose, that an action may be a bad action, and yet that it may be a good thing that there has been such an action. God's commands, and calls, and counsels, do imply another thing, viz. that it is our duty to do those things; and though they may be our duty, yet it may be certain beforehand that we shall not do them.

And if there be any difficulty in this, the same difficulty will attend the scheme of the Arminians; for they allow that God permits sin. Therefore, as he permits it, it cannot be contrary to his will. For if it were contrary to his will as he permits it, then it would be contrary to his will to permit it; for that is the same thing. But nobody will say that God permits sin, when it is against his will to permit it; for this would be to make him act involuntarily, or against his own will.

§ 18. "The wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Psal. lxxvi. 10. If God restrains sin when he pleases; and when he permits it, permits it for the sake of some good that it will be an occasion of, and does actually restrain it in all other cases, it is evident that when he permits it, it is his will that it should come to pass for the sake of the good that it will be an occasion of. If he permits it for the sake of that good, then he does not permit it merely because he would infringe on the creature's liberty in restraining it; as is further evident because he does restrain it when that good is not in view. If it be his

will to permit it to come to pass for the sake of the good that its coming to pass will be an occasion of; then it is his will to permit it, that by its coming to pass he may obtain that good; and therefore it must necessarily be his will that it should come to pass, that he may obtain that good. If he permits it, that, by its coming to pass, he may obtain a certain good, then his proximate end in permitting it, is that it may come to pass. And if he wills the means for the sake of the end, he therein wills the end. If God wills to permit a thing that it may come to pass, then he wills that it should come to pass. This is self-evident. But if he wills to permit it to come to pass, that by its coming to pass he may obtain some end, then he wills to permit it, that it should come to pass. For he will to permit a thing to come to pass, that by its coming to pass good may be obtained, is exactly the same thing as to will to permit it to come to pass, that it may come to pass, and so the end may be attained. To will to permit a thing to come to pass, that he may obtain some end by its coming to pass, and yet to be unwilling that it should come to pass, certainly implies a contradiction.

If the foundation of that distinction that there is between one man and another, whereby one is a good man, and another a wicked man, be God's pleasure and his causation, then God has absolutely elected the particular persons that are to be godly. For, by supposition, it is owing to his determination. Matth. xi. 25, 26, 27. "At that time, Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."

§ 19. It may be argued, from the infinite power and wisdom of God, that nothing can come to pass, but that it must be agreeable to the will and pleasure of God that it should come to pass. For, as was observed before, every being had

rather things should be according to his will, than not. Therefore, if things be not according to his will, it must be for want of power. It cannot be for want of will, by supposition. It must therefore be for want of sufficiency. It must be either because he cannot have it so, or cannot have it so without some difficulty, or some inconvenience; or all may be expressed in a word, viz. that he wants sufficiency to have things as he wishes. But this cannot be the case of a being of infinite power and infinite wisdom. If he has infinite power and wisdom, he can order all things to be just as he wills: And he can order it with perfect and infinite ease, or without the least difficulty or inconveniency. Two things lie before him, both equally within his power, either to order the matter to be, or not to order it to be; and both of them are equally easy to him. One is as little trouble to him as the other; as to easiness or trouble, they are perfectly equal. It is as easy for him to order it, as not to order it. Therefore, his determination, whether it be ordering it, or not ordering it, must be a certain sign of his will in the case. If he does order it to be, this is a sign that his will is that it should be. And if he does not order it to be, but suffers it not to be, that is as sure a sign that he wills that it should not be. So that, however the thing is, it is a sure sign that it is the will of God that it should be as it is.

To this nothing can be objected, unless that it is not for want of will, nor want of power in God, that things be not as he would have them, but because the nature of the subject will not allow of it. But how can this be to the purpose, when the nature of the subject itself is of God, and is wholly within his power, is altogether the fruit of his mere will? And cannot a God of infinite wisdom and infinite power cause the natures of things to be such, and order them so after they are caused, as to have things as he chooses, or without his will's being crossed, and things so coming to pass that he had rather have them otherwise? As, for instance, God foresaw who would comply with the terms of salvation, and who would not: And he could have forborne to give being to such as he foresaw would not comply, if, upon some consideration, it was

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not his pleasure that there should be some who should not comply with the terms of salvation. Objectors may say, God cannot always prevent men's sins, unless he act contrary to the free nature of the subject, or without destroying men's liberty. But will they deny, that an omnipotent and infinitely wise God could not possibly invent and set before men such strong motives to obedience, and have kept them before them in such a manner, as should have influenced all mankind to continue in their obedience, as the elect angels have done, without destroying their liberty? God will order it so, that the saints and angels in heaven never will sin: And does it therefore follow, that their liberty is destroyed, and that they are not free, but forced in their actions? Does it follow, that they are turned into blocks, as the Arminians say the Calvinist doctrines turn men?

§ 20. God decrees all the good that ever comes to pass; and therefore there certainly will come to pass no more good, than he has absolutely decreed to cause; and there certainly and infallibly will no more believe, no more be godly, and no more be saved, than God has decreed that he will cause to believe, and cause to be godly, and will save.

§ 21. The foreknowledge of God will necessarily infer a decree: For God could not foreknow that things would be, unless he had decreed they should be; and that because things would not be future, unless he had decreed they should be. If God, from all eternity, knew that such and such things were future, then they were future; and consequently the proposition was from all eternity true, that such a thing, at such a time, would be. And it is as much impossible that a thing should be future, without some reason of its being future, as that it should actually be, without some reason why it is. It is as perfectly unreasonable to suppose, that this proposition should be true, viz. such a thing will be, or is to be, without a reason why it is true; as it is that this proposition should be true, such a thing actually is, or has been, without some reason why that is true, or why that thing exists.

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For, as the being of the thing is not in its own nature necessary, so that proposition that was true before, viz. that it shall be, is not in its own nature a necessary truth. And therefore I draw this consequence, that if there must be some reason of the futurition of the thing, or why the thing is future; this can be no other than God's decree, or the truth of the proposition, that such a thing will be, has been determined by God. For the truth of the proposition is determined by the supposition. My meaning is, that it does not remain a question; but the matter is decided, whether the proposition shall be true or not. The thing, in its own nature, is not necessary, but only possible; and therefore, it is not of itself that it is future; it is not of itself in a state of futurition, if I may so speak, but only in a state of possibility; and there must be some cause to bring it out of a state of mere possibility, into a state of futurition. This must be God only; for there was no other being by supposition existing. And though other things are future, yet it will not be sufficient to say, that the futurition of other things is the cause of the futurition of this. And it is owing only to him, that is the first being, and that exists necessarily, and of himself, that all other things, that are not in their own nature necessary, or necessarily future, but merely possible, are brought out of that state of mere possibility, into a state of futurition, to be certainly future. Here is an effect already done, viz. the rendering that which in its own nature is only possible, to be certainly future, so that it can be certainly known to be future: And there must be something already existing, that must have caused this effect. Whatsoever is not of itself or by the necessity of its own nature, is an effect of something else. But that such a thing should be future by supposition, is not of itself or by necessity of its own nature. If things that appertain to the creature, or things that come to pass in time, be not future of themselves and of their own nature, then they are future, because God makes them to be future. This is exceedingly evident; for there is nothing else at all beside God and things that come to pass in time. And therefore, if things that come to

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pass in time, have not the reason of their own futurition in themselves; it must be in God.

But if you say, that the ground or reason of their futurition is in the things themselves, then things are future, prior to any decree, or their futurition is antecedent in nature to any decree of God. And then, to what purpose is any decree of God? For, according to this supposition, God's decreeing does not make any thing future, or not future; because it was future, prior to his decree. His decreeing or appointing that any thing shall be, or shall not be, does not alter the case. It is not about to be, or about not to be, any thing the more for God's decreeing it. According to this supposition, God has no freedom or choice in decreeing or appointing any thing. It is not at his choice what shall be future, and what not; no not in one thing. For the futurition of things is by this supposition antecedent in nature to his choice; so that his choosing or refusing does not alter the case. The things in themselves are future, and his decreeing cannot make them not future; for they cannot be future and not future at the same time; neither can it make them future, because they are future already; so that they who thus plead for man's liberty, advance principles which destroy the freedom of God himself. It is allowed that things are future before they come to pass; because God foreknows them. Either things are future antecedently to God's decree and independently of it, or they are not. If they are not future antecedently to, and independently of God's decree, then they are made so by his decree; there is no medium. But if they are so antecedently to his decree, then the above mentioned absurdity will follow, viz. that God has no power by his decree to make any thing future or not future. He has no choice in the case. And if it be already decided, something must have decided it; for, as has been already shown, it is not true without a reason why it is true. And if something has determined or decided the truth of it, it must be God that has decided it, or something else. It cannot be chance or mere accident: That is contrary to every rational supposition. For it is to be supposed, that there is some reason for it, and that something

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does decide it. If there be any thing that comes to pass by mere accident, that comes to pass of itself without any reason. If it be not chance therefore that has decided it, it must be God or the creature. It cannot be the creature as actually existing? For, by supposition, it is determined from all eternity before any creature exists. Therefore, if it be any thing in the creature that decides it in any way, it must be only the futurition of that thing in the creature. But this brings us to the absurdity and contradiction, that the same thing is both the cause and the effect of itself. The very effect, the cause of which we are seeking, is the futurition of the thing; and if this futurition be the cause of that effect, it is the cause of itself.

§ 22. The first objection of the Arminians is, that the divine decree infringes on the creature's liberty. In answer to this objection, we may observe some things to shew what is the true notion of liberty, and the absurdity of their notion of liberty. Their notion of liberty is, that there is a sovereignty in the will, and that the will determines itself, so that its determination to choose or refuse this or that, is primarily within itself; which description of liberty implies a selfcontradiction. For it supposes the will, in its first act, choosing or refusing to be determined by itself; which implies that there is an antecedent act of the will to that first act, determining that act. For, if the will determines its own first act, then there must be an act of the will before that first act, (for that determining is acting) which is a contradiction. There can be no fallacy in this; for we know that if the will determines its own act, it does not determine it without acting. Therefore, here is this contradiction, viz. that there is an act of the will before the first act. There is an act of the will determining what it shall choose, before the first act of choice; which is as much as to say, that there is an act of volition before the first act of volition. For the will's determining what it will choose, is choosing. The will's determining what it will will, is willing. So that according to this notion of liberty, the will must choose before it chooses, in order to deter-

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mine what it will choose. If the will determines itself, it is certain that one act must determine another. If the will determines its own choice, then it must determine by a foregoing act what it will choose. If the will determines its own act, then an antecedent act determines the consequent; for that determining is acting. The will cannot determine without acting. Therefore I inquire what determines that first act of the will, viz. its determination of its own act? It must be answered, according to their scheme, that it is the will by a foregoing act. Here, again, we have the same contradiction, viz. that the first act of the will is determined by an act that is before that first act. If the will determines itself, or determines its own choice, the meaning of it must be, if there be any meaning belonging to it, that the will determines how it will choose; and that it chooses, according to that, its own determination how to choose, or is directed in choosing by that its own determination. But then I would inquire, whether that first determination, that directs the choice, be not itself an act or a volition; and if so, I would inquire what determines that act. Is it another determination still prior to that in the order of nature? Then I would inquire, what determines the first act or determination of all? If the will, in its acts of willing or choosing, determines or directs itself how to choose, then there is something done by the will prior to its act of choosing that is determined, viz. its determining or directing itself how to choose. This act determining or directing, must be something besides or distinct from the choice determined or directed, and must be prior in order of nature to it. Here are two acts of the will, one the cause of the other, viz. the act of the will directing and determining, and the act or choice directed or determined. Now, I inquire, what determines that first act of the will determining or directing, to determine and direct as it does? If it be said, the will determines itself in that; then that supposes there is another act of the will prior to that, directing and determining that act, which is contrary to the supposition. And if it was not, still the question would recur, what determines that first determining act of the will? If the will determines itself, one

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of these three things must be meant, viz. 1. That that very same act of the will determines itself. But this is as absurd as to say that something makes itself; and it supposes it to be before it is. For the act of determining is as much prior to the thing determined, as the act making is before the thing made. Or, 2. The meaning must be, that the will determines its own act, by some other act that is prior to it in order of nature; which implies that the will acts before its first act. Or, 3. The meaning must be, that the faculty, considered at the same time as perfectly without act, determines its own consequent act; which is to talk without a meaning, and is a great absurdity. To suppose that the faculty, remaining at the same time perfectly without act, can determine any thing, is a plain contradiction; for determining is acting. And besides, if the will does determine itself, that power of determining itself does not argue any freedom, unless it be by an act of the will, or unless that determination be itself an act of choice. For what freedom or liberty is there in the will's determining itself, without an act of choice in determining, whereby it may choose which way it will determine itself? So that those that suppose the will has a power of selfdetermination, must suppose that that very determination is an act of the will, or an act of choice, or else it does not at all help them out in what they would, viz. the liberty of the will. But if that very determination how to act, be itself an act of choice, then the question returns, what determines this act of choice.

Also, the foreknowledge of God contradicts their notion of liberty as much, and in every respect in the same manner as a decree. For they do not pretend that decree contradicts liberty any otherwise, than as it infers that it is beforehand certain that the thing will come to pass, and that it is impossible but that it should be, as the decree makes an indissoluble connexion beforehand between the subject and predicate of the proposition, that such a thing shall be. A decree infers no other necessity than that. And God's foreknowledge does infer the same to all intents and purposes. For if from all eternity God foreknew that such a thing would

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be, then the event was infallibly certain beforehand, and that proposition was true from all eternity, that such a thing would be; and therefore there was an indissoluble connexion beforehand between the subject and predicate of that proposition. If the proposition was true beforehand, the subject and predicate of it were connected beforehand. And therefore it follows from hence, that it is utterly impossible that it should not prove true, and that, for this reason, that it is utterly impossible that a thing should be true, and not true, at the same time.

§ 23. The same kind of infallible certainty, that the thing will come to pass, or impossibility but that it should come to pass, that they object against, must necessarily be inferred another way, whether we hold the thing to be any way decreed or not. For it has been shown before, and I suppose none will deny, that God from all eternity decrees his own actions. Therefore he from all eternity decrees every punishment that he ever has inflicted, or will inflict. So that it is impossible, by their own reasoning, but that the punishment should come to pass. And if it be impossible but that the punishment should come to pass, then it is equally impossible but that the sin should come to pass. For if it be possible that the sin should not come to pass, and yet impossible but that the punishment should come to pass, then it is impossible but that God should punish that sin which may never be.

§ 24. For God certainly to know that a thing will be, that possibly may be, and possibly may not be, implies a contradiction. If possibly it may be otherwise, then how can God know certainly that it will be? If it possibly may be otherwise, then he knows it possibly may be otherwise; and that it is inconsistent with his certainly knowing that it will not be otherwise. If God certainly knows it will be, and yet it may possibly be otherwise, then it may possibly happen to be otherwise than God certainly knows it will be. If so, then it may possibly happen that God may be mistaken in his

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judgment, when he certainly knows; for it is supposed that it is possible that it should be otherwise than he judges. For that it should be otherwise than he judges, and that he should be mistaken, are the same thing. How unfair therefore is it in those that hold the foreknowledge of God, to insist upon this objection from human liberty, against the decrees, when their scheme is attended with the same difficulty, exactly in the same manner!

§ 25. Their other objection is, that God's decrees make God the author of sin. I answer, that there is no more necessity of supposing God the author of sin, on this scheme, than on the other. For if we suppose, according to my doctrine, that God has determined, from all eternity, the number and persons of those that shall perform the condition of the covenant of grace; in order to support this doctrine, there is no need of maintaining any more concerning God's decreeing sin, than this, viz. that God has decreed that he will permit all the sin that ever comes to pass, and that upon his permitting it, it will certainly come to pass. And they hold the same thing; for they hold that God does determine beforehand to permit all the sin that does come to pass; and that he certainly knows that if he does permit it, it will come to pass. I say, they in their scheme allow both these; they allow that God does permit all the sin to come to pass, that ever does come to pass; and those that allow the foreknowledge of God, do also allow the other thing, viz. that he knows concerning all the sin that ever does really come to pass, that it will come to pass upon his permitting it. So that if this be making God the author of sin, they make him so in the very same way that they charge us with doing it.

§ 26. One objection of their's against God's decreeing or ordering, in any sense, that sin should come to pass, is, that man cannot do this without making himself sinful and in some measure, guilty of the sin, and that therefore God cannot. To this I answer, that the same objection lies against their own scheme two ways: 1. Because they own that God

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does permit sin, and that he determines to permit it beforehand, and that he knows, with respect to all sin that ever is committed, that upon his permitting it, it will come to pass; and we hold no other. 2. Their objection is, that what is a sin in men, is a sin in God; and therefore, in any sense to decree sin, would be a sin. But if this objection be good, it is as strong against God's permission of sin, which they allow; for it would be a sin in men to permit sin. We ought not to permit or suffer it where we have opportunity to hinder it; and we cannot permit it without making ourselves in some measure guilty. Yet they allow that God does permit sin; and that his permitting it does not make him guilty of it. Why must the argument from men to God be stronger in the other case than in this?

§ 27. They say, that we ought to begin in religion, with the perfections of God, and make these a rule to interpret scripture. Ans. 1. If this be the best rule, I ask, why is it not as good a rule to argue from these perfections of God, his omniscience, infinite happiness, infinite wisdom and power, as his other attributes that they argue from? If it be not as good a rule to argue from these as those, it must be because they are not so certain, or because it is not so certain that he is possessed of these perfections. But this they will not maintain; for his moral perfections are proved no otherwise than by arguing from his natural perfections; and therefore the latter must be equally certain with the former. What we prove another thing by, must at least be as certain as it makes the thing proved by it. If an absolute and universal decree does infer a seeming inconsistence with some of God's moral perfections, they must confess the contrary to have a seeming inconsistence with the natural perfections of God.

Again, 2dly. They lay it down for a rule to embrace no doctrine which they by their own reason cannot reconcile with the moral perfections of God. But I would shew the unreasonableness of this rule. For, 1. If this be a good rule, then it always was so. Let us then see what will follow. We

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shall then, 2dly, have reason to conclude every thing to be really inconsistent with God's moral perfections, that we cannot reconcile with his moral perfections; for if we have not reason to conclude that it is inconsistent, then we have no reason to conclude that it is not true. But if this be true that we have reason to conclude every thing is inconsistent with God's moral perfections which we cannot reconcile with those perfections, then David had reason to conclude that some things that he saw take place, in fact were inconsistent with God's moral perfections, for he could not reconcile them with those perfections, Psalm lxxiii. And Job had cause to come to the same conclusion concerning some events in his day. 3. If it be a good rule that we must conclude that to be inconsistent with the divine perfections, that we cannot reconcile with, or, which is the same thing, that we cannot see how it is consistent with those perfections, then it must be because we have reason to conclude that it cannot happen that our reason cannot see how it can be, and then it will follow that we must reject the doctrine of the Trinity, the incarnation of the Son of God, &c.

The scripture itself supposes that there are some things in the scripture that men may not be able to reconcile with God's moral perfections. See Rom. ix. 19. "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" And the apostle does not answer the objection, by shewing us how to reconcile it with the moral perfections of God, but by representing the arrogancy of quarrelling with revealed doctrines under such a pretence, and not considering the infinite distance between God and us. "Nay, but who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?" And God answered Job after the same manner. God rebuked him for darkening counsel by words without knowledge, and answered him, only by declaring and manifesting to him the infinite distance between God and him; so letting him know, that it became him humbly to submit to God, and acknowledge his justice even in those things that were difficult to his reason; and that without solving his difficulties any other way than by making him sensible of the weakness of his own understanding.

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§ 28. If there be no election, then it is not God that makes men to differ, expressly contrary to scripture. No man ought to praise God for that happiness that he has above other men, or for that distinction that is between him and other men, that he is holy and that he is saved; when they are not holy and not saved. The saints in heaven, when they look on the devils in hell, have no occasion to praise God on account of the difference between them. Some of the ill consequences of the Arminian doctrines are, that it robs God of the greater part of the glory of his grace, and takes away a principal motive to love and praise him, and exalts man to God's room, and ascribes the glory to self, that belongs to God alone. Rom. xi. 7. "The election hath obtained, and the rest were blinded." That by the *election* here is not meant the Gentiles, but the elect part of the Jews, is most apparent by the context. Such Arminians who allow, that some only are elected, and not all that are saved, but that none are reprobated, overthrow hereby their own main objection against reprobation, viz. that God offers salvation to all, and encourages them to seek it, which, say they, would be inconsistent with God's truth, if he had absolutely determined not to save them; for they will not deny that those that are elected whilst ungodly, are warned of God to beware of eternal damnation, and to avoid such and such things, lest they should be damned. But for God to warn men to beware of damnation, though he has absolutely determined that they shall not be damned, is exactly parallel with his exhorting men to seek salvation, though he has actually determined that they shall not be saved.

§ 29. That election is not from a foresight of works, or conditional, as depending on the condition of man's will, is evident by 2 Tim. i. 9. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Philip. ii. 13. "For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." Rom. ix. 15, 16. "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and will have compassion on

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whom I will have compassion. So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Men's labors and endeavors themselves are from God. 1 Cor. xv. 10. "But by the grace of God, I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed upon me, was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all. Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

§ 30. God decrees all things, and even all sins. Acts ii. 23. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain;" iv. 28. "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." If the thing meant, be only that Christ's sufferings should come to pass by some means or other; I answer, they could not come to pass but by sin. For contempt and disgrace was one thing he was to suffer. Even the free actions of men are subject to God's disposal. Prov. xxi. 1. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord; he turneth it as the rivers of water, whithersoever it pleaseth him." See Jer. lii. 3. "For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon." The not complying with the terms of the covenant of grace is decreed, 1 Pet. ii. 8. "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to them that stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed." What man determines, never comes to pass, unless God determines it, Lam. iii. 37. "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, and the Lord commandeth it not?" By commanding is here meant willing; and God is elsewhere said to speak, and it was done; to command, and it stood fast. God determines the limits of men's lives. This is exceeding evident. Job vii. 1. "Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? Are not his days also like the days of an hireling?" *Days of an hireling* signify an appointed, certain, limited time; as Isa. xvi. 14, and Isa. xxi. 16. If the limits of men's lives are determined, men's free actions must be determined, and even

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their sins; for their lives often depend on such acts. See also Job xiv. 5.

§ 31. If God does not know all things, then his knowledge may increase, he may gain, and may grow wiser as he grows older. He may discover new things, and may draw consequences from them. And he may be mistaken: If he does not know, he may guess wrong: If he does not know, he has no infallible judgment; for an infallible judgment is knowledge. And if he may be mistaken, he may order matters wrong; he may be frustrated; his measures may be broken. For, doubtless, in things that are uncertain, he orders things according to what appears most probable, or else he fails in prudence. But in so ordering things, his measures may be broken. And then the greater part of the great events, viz. events among rational creatures, would be uncertain to him. For the greater part of them depend on men's free actions. That he does foreknow, is evident by his predicting and foretelling events, and even the sins of men, as Judas's sin. If he did not foreknow, he might change his will as he altered his views. Now, it is especially with respect to God's will and purposes, that he is said in scripture not to be changeable. Having thus proved the foreknowledge of God, and the greater part of Arminians not denying it, I shall hereafter take it for granted, and shall argue against those only that allow it. If he did not foreknow and might be disappointed, he might repent.

§ 32. They say, as God's power extends only to all things possible, so God's knowledge only extends to all things knowable.

Ans. Things impossible, or contradictions, are not things; but events that come to pass, are things. God's power does extend to all things, otherwise it would not be infinite. So neither is the knowledge of God infinite, unless God knows all things. To suppose that God cannot do things impossible, does not suppose that God's power can be increased. But to suppose that God does not know men's free actions, does sup-

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pose that God's knowledge may be increased. To suppose that God's decrees are conditional, in the sense of the Arminians, or that they depend, as they suppose, on a foresight of something that shall come to pass in time, is to suppose that something that first begins to be in time, is the cause of something that has been from all eternity, which is absurd; for nothing can be a cause of that existence, which is before the existence of that cause. What an absurdity is it, to suppose that that existence which is an effect, is effected by a cause, when that cause that effects it, is not, or has no being? If it be answered, that it is not the actual existence of the thing, that is the reason or cause of the decree, but the foresight of the existence; and the foresight of the existence may be at the same time with the decree, and before it, in the order of nature, though the existence itself is not; and that it is not properly the actual existence of the thing foreseen, that is the cause of the decree, but the existence of it in the divine foreknowledge. I reply, that this does not help the difficulty at all, but only puts it a step farther off; for still, by their scheme, the foreknowledge depends on the future actual existence; so that the actual existence is the cause of the divine foreknowledge, which is infinite ages before it. And it is a great absurdity to suppose this effect to flow from this cause, before the existence of the cause. And whatever is said, the absurdity will occur, unless we suppose that the divine decree is the ground of the futurition of the event, and also the ground of the foreknowledge of it. Then the cause is before the effect; but otherwise the effect is before the cause.

§ 33. If God absolutely determined that Christ's death should have success in gathering a church to him, it will follow that there was a number absolutely elected, or that God had determined some should surely be saved. If God determined that some should surely be saved, that implies that he had determined that he would see to it, that some should perform the conditions of salvation and be saved; or, which is the same thing, that he would cause that they should be surely saved. But this cannot be, without fixing on the per-

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sons beforehand. For the cause is before the effect. There is no such thing as God's resolving absolutely beforehand that he would save some, and yet not determining who they should be, before they were actually saved: Or that he should see to it, that there should be in a number the requisites of salvation, and yet not determine who, till they actually have the requisites of salvation. But God had absolutely determined that some should be saved, yea a great number, after Christ's death; and had determined it beforehand. Because he had absolutely promised it; Isa. xlix. 6, and liii. 10. See in Psal. lxxii. and other places in the Psalms, and Tit. ii. 14. God, having absolutely purposed this before Christ's death, must either have then determined the persons, or resolved that he would hereafter determine the persons; at least, if he saw there was need of it, and saw that they did not come in of themselves. But this latter supposition, if we allow it, overthrows the Arminian scheme. It shows, that such a predetermination, or absolute election, is not inconsistent with God's perfections, or the nature of the gospel constitution, or God's government of the world, and his promise of reward to the believing and obedient, and the design of gospel offers and commands, as the Arminians suppose. If God has absolutely determined to save some certain persons, then, doubtless, he has in like manner determined concerning all that are to be saved. God's promising, supposes not only that the thing is future, but that God will do it. If it be left to chance, or man's contingent will, and the event happen right, God is never the truer. He performs not his promise; he takes no effectual care about it; it is not he that promised, that performs. That thing, or, rather nothing, called fortune, orders all....Concerning the absurdity of supposing that it was not absolutely determined beforehand, what success there should be of Christ's death; see *Polhill's Spec. Theolog. in Christo*, p. 165....171.

It is pretended, that the antecedent certainty of any sin's being committed, seeing that it is attended with necessity, takes away all liberty, and makes warnings and exhortations to avoid sin, a mere illusion. To this I would bring the in-

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stance of Peter. Christ told him, that he should surely deny him thrice that night, before the cock should crow twice. And yet, after that, Christ exhorted all his disciples to watch and pray, that they might not fall into temptation; and directs, that he who had no sword, should sell his garment and buy one.

§ 34. How evident is it, that God sets up that to be sought after as a reward of virtue, and the fruit of our endeavors, which yet he has determined shall never come to pass? As, 1 Sam. xiii. 13. "And Samuel said unto Saul, Thou hast done foolishly; thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee. For now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever." It is evident that God had long before decreed, that the kingdom of Israel should be established in the tribe of Judah.... Luke xxii. 22. "The son of man goeth as it was determined [Matth. xxvi. 24, and Mark xiv. 21, as it is written of him] but woe unto that man by whom the son of man is betrayed." *As it was determined:* As this passage is not liable to the ambiguities which some have apprehended in Acts ii. 23, and iv. 28, (which yet seem on the whole to be parallel to it in their most natural construction) I look upon it as an evident proof, that those things are in the language of scripture said to be determined or decreed, (or exactly bounded and marked out by God, as the word ὁρίζω most naturally signifies) which he sees will in fact happen in consequence of his volitions, without any necessitating agency, as well as those events of which he is properly the author; and, as Beza expresses it, "*Qui sequitur deum emendate sane loquitur*, we need not fear falling into any impropriety of speech, when we use the language which God has taught." *Doddridge in loc.*

§ 35. As to the decrees of election, see Psal. lxv. 4. "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." Isa. xli. 9. "Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and

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said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away." Matth. xx. 16. "So the last shall be first, and the first last: For many be called, but few chosen." Chap. xxii. 14. "For many are called, but few are chosen." Chap. xxiv. 24. "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; in so much that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very *elect*." John vi. 37....46. "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out," &c. Chap. x. 3, 4, and verse 11, and 14....17. v. 26....30. "To him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. I am the good Shepherd; and know my sheep, and am known of mine. Therefore doth my Father love me; because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you," &c. Chap. xvii. 6....20. "I have manifested thy name unto the men thou gavest me out of the world: Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word, &c. Neither pray I for these alone; but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." Acts xviii. 10. "For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee, to hurt thee: For I have much people in this city." As to reprobation, see Matth. xi. 20....27. "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not, &c. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." John vi. 44....46. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: And I will raise him up at the last day, &c. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father." Chap. viii. 47. "He that is of God, heareth God's words: Ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." Chap. x. 26. "But ye believe

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not, because you are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." Chap. xvii. 9....13. "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine," &c. 1 Thes. v. 9. "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. ii. 8. "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: Whereunto also they were appointed." Jude i. 4. "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness." 1 John iv. 6. "We are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of of error." Rev. iii. 8. "I know thy works: Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: For thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." Chap. xx. 12, 15. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: And another book was opened, which is the book of life: And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." John xii. 37....41. "But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him. Because that Esaias said, he hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, &c. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him." Rom. ix. 6, 7, 8, 11....14, 16.... 19. v. 21....24. v. 27, 29, 33. "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: But, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For the children, being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said, "The elder shall serve the

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younger, &c. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, &c. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another to dishonor? &c. Even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone, and a rock of offence: And whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." And chap. xi. 1....6. v. 7....11. v. 15, 17, 19....23. v. 32, 36. "I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin, &c. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: Otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: Otherwise, work is no more work. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this day. Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompence unto them, &c. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in, &c. And they also, if they abide not in unbelief, shall be grafted in: For God is able to graft them in again. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: To whom be glory for ever. Amen."

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§ 36. All that is intended when we say that God decrees all that comes to pass, is, that all events are subject to the disposals of providence, or that God orders all things in his providence; and that he intended from eternity to order all things in providence, and intended to order them as he does. Election does not signify only something common to professing Christians, Matth. xx. 16. "Many are called, but few are chosen." Matth. xxiv. 31. "He shall send forth his angels, and gather together his elect."

§ 37. God's foreknowledge appears from this, that God has foretold that there should be some good men, as the Arminians themselves allow. *Stebbing*, in his Treatise concerning the Operations of the Holy Spirit, p. 237, second edition, says as follows: "So long as a man may be certain that those things will come to pass which God hath foretold, he may be certain, that God's grace will prevail in multitudes of men before the end of all things. For, by divers predictions in holy writ we are assured, that when Christ shall come to judgment, there will be some who shall be changed, and put on immortality."

§ 38. The scriptures, in teaching us this doctrine, are guilty of no hard imposition on our understanding of a doctrine contrary to reason. If they had taught the contrary doctrine, it would have been much more contrary to reason, and a much greater temptation to persons of diligent and thorough consideration, to doubt of the divinity of the scripture.

§ 39. Concerning the decreeing of sin, see Acts iii. 17, 18, with Acts xiii. 27. "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."...."For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are

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read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.

§ 40. It is objected, that this is a speculative point. So might they say, Jesus's being the Messiah, is a speculative point.

§ 41. If God's inviting or commanding a person to do a thing, when he, in his decree, has ordained that it shall be otherwise, argues insincerity in the command or invitation, the insincerity must be in this, viz. that he commands a thing to be done, when his end in commanding is not, that the thing may be done; which cannot be his end; because he knows certainly, at the time that he commands it, that it will not be. But it is certain, that God's commanding a thing to be done, which he certainly knows at the time will not be done, is no evidence of insincerity in God in commanding. For thus God commanded Pharaoh to let the people go: And yet he knew he would not obey, as he says at the same time that he orders the command to be given him, Exod. iii. 18, 19. "And thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and you shall say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us; and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God: And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go; no not by a mighty hand." See also chap. iv. 21, 22, 23, and chap. vii. 1....7; see also chap. ix. 16, compared with Rom. ix. 17.

§ 42. It is impossible for an infinitely wise and good being to do otherwise, than to choose what he sees on the whole to be best. And certainly reason requires us to suppose, that of all possible events with respect to sin, and the conversion and salvation of particular persons, it is better that one of those possible and opposite events should come to pass than another; and therefore, an infinitely wise and good being must choose accordingly. What God permits, he decrees to permit. If it is no blemish to God to permit sin, then it is no

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blemish to him to purpose or intend to permit it. And if he be omniscient, and does designedly permit that sin which actually comes to pass, then he designedly permits that sin, knowing, if he permits it, it will actually come to pass. And this is an effectual permission, and all that we plead for. What, then, do our adversaries quarrel with us for? And why do they pretend that we charge God with being the author of sin? There is a way of drawing consequences from scripture, that begs the question. As the Arminians say, there are many more texts plainly against election, than seem to be for it, viz. those texts that represent, that general offers of salvation are made, as though it was left to men's choice, whether they will be saved or no. But that is begging the question. For the question very much consists in these things, whether an absolute decree be inconsistent with man's liberty, and so with a general offer of salvation, &c.

§ 43. Concerning the Arminian notion of election, that when the apostles speak of election, they only mean that by which the professing Christians in those days were distinguished from others, as the nation of Israel of old was; this is unreasonable, according to their own principles. For if they were elected, and that was the reason why they so far embraced the gospel, as to become Christians rather than others, then, on Arminian principles, no thanks were due to them for embracing the gospel; neither were others, who continued openly to reject the gospel, to blame; and it was in vain to use any means to persuade any to join with the Christian church; nor were any to blame for not doing it, or to be praised for doing it, &c. Besides, their principles render vain all endeavors to spread the gospel. For the gospel will certainly be spread to all nations that are elected; and all such shall have the offers of the gospel, whether they take any care of the matter or no.

§ 44. Dr. Whitby, to make out his scheme, makes the word election signify two entirely different things; one, elec-

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tion to a common faith of Christianity; another, a conditional election to salvation. But every one must be sensible of the unreasonableness of such shifting and varying, and turning into all shapes, to evade the force of scripture.

§ 45. It is evident the apostle, in Rom. ix. has not only respect to God's sovereignty in the election and preterition of nations, because he illustrates his meaning by the instance of a particular person, viz. Pharaoh. The exercise of the sovereignty that he speaks of, appears by the express words of the apostle about vessels of mercy and vessels of wrath, vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor. But the vessels of mercy, he speaks of as prepared to glory. They, it is plain, are those that shall be saved, and the vessels of wrath are those that perish. He speaks of those that shall be saved, v. 27. "A remnant shall be saved." What is there that God does decree according to the scheme of the Arminians so as to make it in any measure consistent with itself? He does not decree any of the great events of the world of mankind, (which are the principal events, and those to which all others are subordinated) because these depend on men's free will. He does not absolutely decree any events wherein the welfare of men is concerned; for if he does, then these things, according to their scheme, cannot be the subject of prayer. For according to them, it is absurd to seek or pray for things, which we do not know but that God has absolutely decreed and fixed before. We do not know but that he has determined absolutely and unfrustrably from eternity, that they shall not be; and then, by their scheme, we cannot pray in faith for them. See Whitby, p. 177, &c. And if God does not decree and order those events beforehand, then what becomes of the providence of God; and what room is there for prayer, if there be no providence? Prayer is shut out this way also. According to them, we cannot reasonably pray for the accomplishment of things that are already fixed, before our prayers; for then our prayers alter nothing, and what, say they, signifies it for us to pray?

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Dr. Whitby insists upon it, that we cannot pray in faith for the salvation of others, if we do not know that Christ died intentionally for their salvation.

§ 46. To Dr. Whitby's observation, that the apostle speaks of churches, as though they were all elect, I answer, he speaks from a judgment of charity, as Dr. Whitby himself observes, p. 460. God foreknows the elect, as God is said to know those that are his own sheep from strangers; as Christ is said not to know the workers of iniquity, that is, he owns them not. In the same sense, God is said to know the elect from all eternity; that is, he knew them as a man knows his own things. He acknowledged them from eternity. He owns them as his children. Reprobates he did not know; they were strangers to God from all eternity. If God ever determined, in the general, that some of mankind should certainly be saved, and did not leave it altogether undetermined whether ever so much as one soul of all mankind shouldbelieve in Christ; it must be that he determined that some particular persons should certainly believe in him. For it is certain that if he has left it undetermined concerning this and that, and the other person, whether ever he should believe or not, and so of every particular person in the world; then there is no necessity at all, that this or that, or any particular person in the world, should ever be saved by Christ, for the matter of any determination of God's. So that, though God sent his Son into the world, yet the matter was left altogether undetermined by God, whether ever any person should be saved by him, and there was all this ado about Christ's birth, death, resurrection, ascension, and sitting at God's right hand, when it was not as yet determined whether he should ever save one soul, or have any mediatorial kingdom at all.

§ 47. It is most absurd, to call such a conditional election as they talk of, by the name of election, seeing there is a necessary connexion between faith in Jesus Christ and eternal life. Those that believe in Christ, must be saved, according to God's inviolable constitution of things. What nonsense is

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it, therefore, to talk of choosing such to life from all eternity out of the rest of mankind? A predestination of such to life is altogether useless and needless. By faith in one that has satisfied for sin, the soul necessarily becomes free from sin. By faith in one that has bought eternal life for them, they have, of unavoidable consequence, a right to eternal life. Now, what sense is it to say, that God from all eternity, of his free grace, chose out those that he foresaw would have no guilt of sin, that they should not be punished for their guilt, as others were, when it is a contradiction to suppose that they can be punished for their guilt when they have none? For who can lay any thing to their charge, when it is Christ that has died? And what do they mean by an election of men to that which is, in its own nature, impossible that it should not be, whether they are elected to it or no; or by God's choosing them that had a right to eternal life, that they should possess it? What sense is it to say that a creditor chooses out those among his debtors to be free from debt, that owe him nothing? But if they say that election is only God's determination, in the general, that all that believe shall be saved, in what sense can this be called election? They are not *persons* that are here chosen, but mankind is divided into two sorts, the one believing, and the other unbelieving; and God chooses the believing sort. It is not election of persons, but of qualifications. God does from all eternity choose to bestow eternal life upon those that have a right to it, rather than upon those who have a right to damnation. Is this all the election we have an account of in God's word? Such a thing as election may well be allowed; for that there is such a thing as sovereign love is certain; that is, love, not for any excellency, but merely God's good pleasure. For whether it is proper to say that God from all eternity loved the elect or no, it is proper to say that God loved men after the fall, while sinners and enemies; for God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son to die. This was not for any goodness or excellency, but merely God's good pleasure; for he would not love the fallen angels.

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§ 48. Christ is often spoken of in scripture as being, by way of eminency, the Elect or Chosen of God. Isa. xlii. 1. "Behold my Servant whom I uphold, mine Elect in whom my soul delighteth." Luke xxiii. 35. "If he be the Christ, the Chosen of God." 1 Pet. ii. 4. "A living stone, chosen of God, and precious." Psal. lxxxix. 3. "I have made a covenant with my Chosen:" v. 19. "I have exalted one chosen out of the people." Hence those persons in the Old Testament, that were the most remarkable types of Christ, were the subjects of a very remarkable election of God, by which they were designed to some peculiar honor of the prophetical, priestly, or kingly office. So Moses was called God's chosen, in that wherein he was eminently a type of Christ, viz. as a prophet and ruler, and mediator for his people; Psal. cvi. 23. "Had not Moses, his chosen, stood before him in the breach." So Aaron was constituted high priest by a remarkable election of God, as in Numb. xvi. 5. and xvii. 5. Deut. xxi. 5. So David the king was the subject of a remarkable election; Psal. lxxviii. 67....72. "Moreover, he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim, but chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Sion; which he loved; and he built his sanctuary like high palaces; like the earth which he hath established for ever. He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds, from following the ewes great with young; he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance." 1 Sam. xvi. 7....10. "The Lord hath not chosen this, neither hath the Lord chosen this; the Lord hath not chosen these." Christ is the chosen of God, both as to his divine and human nature. As to his divine nature, he was chosen of God, though not to any addition to his essential glory or real happiness, which is infinite, yet to great declarative glory. As he is man, he is chosen of God to the highest degree of real glory and happiness of all creatures. As to both, he is chosen of God to the office and glory of the mediator between God and men, and the head of all the elect creation. His election, as it respects his divine nature, was for his worthiness and excellency and infinite amiableness in the sight of God, and perfect fitness for that which God chose

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him to, and his worthiness was the ground of his election. But his election, as it respects his human nature, was free and sovereign, not being for any worthiness, but his election was the foundation of his worthiness. His election, as he is God, is a manifestation of God's infinite wisdom. The wisdom of any being is discovered by the wise choice he makes, so the infinite wisdom of God is manifest in the wisdom of his choice when he chose his eternal Son, one so fit, upon all accounts, for the office of a mediator, when he only was fit, and when he was perfectly and infinitely fit; and yet his fitness was so difficult to be discerned, that none but one of infinite wisdom could discover it. His election, as he was man, was a manifestation of God's sovereignty and grace. God had determined to exalt one of the creatures so high, that he should be one person with God, and should have communion with God, and should have glory in all respects answerable; and so should be the head of all other elect creatures, that they might be united to God and glorified in him. And his sovereignty appears in the election of the man Jesus, various ways. It appears in choosing the species of creatures of which he should be, viz. the race of mankind, and not the angels, the superior species. God's sovereignty also appears in choosing this creature of the seed of fallen creatures that were become enemies and rebels, abominable, miserable creatures. It appears in choosing that he should be of such a branch of mankind, in selecting the posterity of David, a mean person originally, and the youngest of the family. And as he was the seed of the woman, so his sovereignty appears in his being the seed of such particular women; as of Leah, the uncomely wife of Jacob, whom her husband had not chosen; and Tamar, a Canaanitess, and a harlot; and Rahab a harlot; and Ruth a Moabitess; and of Bathsheba, one that had committed adultery, and as he was the seed of many a mean person. And his sovereignty appears in the choice of that individual female of whom Christ was born.

It was owing to this election of God, that the man Jesus was not one of the corrupt race of mankind, so that his freedom from sin and damnation is owing to the free, sovereign,

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electing love of God in him, as well as in the rest of elect men. All holiness, all obedience and good works, and perseverance in him, was owing to the electing love of God, as well as in his elect members. And so his freedom from eternal damnation was owing to the free, electing love of God another way, viz. as it was owing to God's electing love to him and his members, but to him in the first place, that he did not fail in that great and difficult work that he undertook; that he did not fail under his extreme sufferings, and so eternally continue under them. For if he had failed; if his courage, resolution and love had been conquered by his sufferings, he never could have been delivered from them; for then he would have failed in his obedience to God, and his love to God failing, and being overcome by sufferings, these sufferings would have failed of the nature of an acceptable sacrifice to God, and the infinite value of his sufferings would have failed, and so must be made up in infinite duration, to atone for his own deficiency. But God having chosen Christ, he could not fail in this work, and so was delivered from his sufferings, from the eternity of them, by the electing love of God. Justification and glorification were fruits of God's foreknowledge and predestination in him, as well as in his elect members.

So that the man Christ Jesus has the eternal, electing love of God to him, to contemplate and admire, and to delight and rejoice his heart, as all his elect members have. He has it before him as others have, eternally to praise God for his free and sovereign election of him, and to ascribe the praise of his freedom from eternal damnation, (which he, with his elect members, beholds, and has had a sense of, far beyond all the rest, and so has more cause of joy and praise for his deliverance from it) and the praise of the glory he possesses, to that election. This election is not for Christ's works or worthiness, for all his works and worthiness are the fruits of it. God had power over this seed of the woman, to make it either a vessel to honor or dishonor, as he had over the rest.

Christ is, by way of eminency, called THE ELECT of God. For though other elect men are by election distin-

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guished from the greater part of mankind, yet they, in their election, have that which is common to thousands and millions; and though the elect angels are distinguished by election from the angels that fell, yet they are chosen among myriads of others; but this man, by his election, is vastly distinguished from all other creatures in heaven or earth; and Christ, in his election, is the head of election, and the pattern of all other election. Christ is the head of all elect creatures; and both angels and men are chosen in him in some sense, i. e. chosen to be in him. All elect men are said to be chosen in Christ, Eph. 1. 4. Election contains two things, viz. foreknowledge and predestination, which are distinguished in the 8th chapter of Romans. The one is choosing persons to be God's, which is a foreknowing of them; and the other, a destining them to be conformed to the image of his Son, both in holiness and blessedness. The elect are chosen in him, with respect to those two, in senses somewhat diverse. With respect to foreknowledge or foreknowing, we are chosen in him as God chose us, to be actually his in this way, viz. by being in Christ, or being members of his Son. This is the way that God determined we should actually become his. God chose Christ, and gave his elect people to him; and so, looking on them as his, owned them for his own. But by predestination, which is consequent on his foreknowledge, we are elected in Christ, as we are elected in his election. For God having in foreknowledge given us to Christ, he thenceforward beheld us as members and parts of him; and so ordaining the head to glory, he therein ordained the members to glory. In destining Christ to eternal life, he destined all parts of Christ to it also. So that we are appointed to eternal life in Christ, being in Christ, his members from eternity. In his being appointed to life, we are appointed to life. So Christ's election is the foundation of ours, as much as his justification and glorification are the foundation of ours. By election in scripture is sometimes meant this latter part, viz. destination to conformity to Christ in life and glory, as 2 Thess. ii. 13. "God from the beginning hath chosen you to salvation." And it seems to be

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spoken of in this sense chiefly, in Eph. i. 3, 4, 5. "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

§ 49. 2 Thess. ii. 13. "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Concerning this scripture I observe the following things: 1. The word translated *chosen* is a word that signifies to choose or pick out from many others. 2. That this choosing is given as a reason why those differ from others that believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness, as an instance of the distinguishing grace of God; and therefore the apostle mentions their being chosen, their election as the ground of their sanctification by the Spirit and belief of the truth. 3. The apostle speaks of their being chosen to salvation, as a ground of their perseverance, or the reason why they never shall fall away, as others spoken of before, whereby they failed of salvation. See the preceding verses. Compare Heb. vi. 9. 4. They are spoken of as thus chosen from the beginning.

That place, Matth. xx. 21....23. "Grant that these my two sons may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom;....it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my father," affords an invincible argument for particular, personal predestination.

It is an evidence that the apostle, in chap. ix. of Romans, has not respect solely to an election and dereliction of nations or public societies, that one instance which he produces to illustrate and confirm what he says, is the dereliction of a particular person, even Pharaoh, Rom. ix. 17. So it is an instance of God's mercy to a particular person, even Moses. When he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I

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will have mercy, and will have compassion on whom I will have compassion," &c. the words cited were used by God on occasion of, and with relation to his mercy to, a particular person, even Moses; (see Exod. xxxiii. 19.) And the language in that verse and the next, is suited to particular persons; as, verse 16, and 18, and verses 22, 23. And the apostle shews plainly, verses 27, 29, that it is not an election of nations or public societies, but a distinction of some particular persons from others of the same society; as it was a distinction of particular persons, in preserving some, when others were destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar's armies; and in returning some from captivity, and leaving others. This was not a showing of mercy to one public society in distinction from another. So in chap. x. 4, 5, where the apostle plainly continues to speak of the same election, it was not by a national election, or election of any public society, that God distinguished the seven thousand that he had reserved, who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

John vi. 37. "All that the Father hath given me shall come to me. And this is the Father's will which sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."...."What is this being given to Christ to be raised up again to everlasting life, but the election of particular persons to salvation? And since it is the Father's will, that of all that he has given to Christ, he should lose nothing; this election must be so absolute as to insure their salvation." *Green's Friendly Conferences.*

It is plainly and abundantly taught in scripture, that election is not of works: Rom. ix. 11. "That the purpose of God according to election might stand, *not of works*, but of him that calleth." Verse 11. "Neither of them *having done either good or evil.*" And Rom. xi. 5, 6. "Even so at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the *election of grace.* And if by grace, then it is no more *of works:* Otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: Otherwise work is no more work." 2 Tim. i. 9. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, *not according to our works*, but according to his own

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purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

How invincible a proof of the Calvinistical doctrine of election is that place in Rom. xi. 5. "Even so then at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Dr. Doddridge observes upon it, that some explain this of having chosen grace, i. e. the gospel. But that turn is very unnatural, and neither suits the phrase, nor the connexion with the former clause, or with the next verse, where the apostle comments on his own words.

§ 50. If God does not some way in his providence, and so in his predeterminations, order what the volitions of men shall be, he would be as dependent in governing the world, as a skilful mariner is in governing his ship, in passing over a turbulent, tempestuous ocean, where he meets constantly, and through the whole voyage, with things that agitate the ship, have great influence on the motions of it, and are so cross and grievous to him, that he is obliged to accommodate himself in the best manner that he can. He meets with cross winds, violent tempests, strong currents, and great opposition from enemies; none of which things he has the disposal of, but is forced to suffer. He only guides the ship, and, by his skill, turns that hither and thither, and steers it in such a manner as to avoid dangers, as well as the case will allow.

§ 51. As to that objection against the election which the apostle speaks of in his epistles, as an election by which such should be distinguished as should certainly be saved at last, viz. that many of those whom the apostle calls elect, chosen in Christ, &c. actually turned apostates: What Dr. Doddridge observes in his note on Eph. i. 4, may be a sufficient answer. "The apostle speaks of whole societies in general as consisting of saints and believers, because this was the predominant character; and he had reason, in the judgment of charity, to believe the greater part were such; (compare Phil. i. 7.) Nor did he always judge it necessary to make exceptions in reference to a few hypocrites who had crept in

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among them, any more than Christ judged it so, to speak of Judas as excluded, when he mentions the twelve thrones of judgment on which the apostles should sit." (Matth. xix. 28.)

§ 52. Many have a notion concerning some things in religion, and, in particular, concerning predestination, that if they be the truth, yet it is not best that they should be known. But many reasons may be offered against this notion.

§ 53. What the devil did to afflict Job, was the exercise and fruit of his devilish disposition, and his acts therein were devilish. And yet it is most apparent, that those acts and effects of the devil towards Job, were appointed by infinite wisdom for holy ends; but not accomplished by God any otherwise than by permission.

§ 54. There were many absolute promises of old, that salvation should actually be accomplished, and that it should be of great extent, or extending to great multitudes of mankind; as, that "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." "In thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Psalm xxii. 30. "A seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." Isa. liii. 10. "He shall see his seed." Psalm ii. 6. "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance," &c. Psalm cx. "Sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool." "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power;" and innumerable others. And if there were absolute promises of this, then there were absolute purposes of it; for that which is sincerely, absolutely promised, is with an absolute purpose of fulfilling the promise. But how can it be devised, that there should be an absolute, determinate, infallible, unchangeable purpose, that Christ should actually save vast multitudes of mankind; and yet it be not absolutely purposed that he should save any one single person, but that with regard to every individual soul, this was left undetermined by God, to be determined by man's contingent will, which might determine for salvation, or against

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it, there being nothing to render it impossible concerning any one, that his will would not finally determine against it? Observe, these prophecies are not merely predictions, but are of the nature of promises, and are often so called: "Which he hath promised by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began," &c. God takes care to fulfil his own promises; but, according to this scheme, it is not God that fulfils these promises; but men, left to themselves, to their contingent wills, fulfil them. Man's will, which God does not determine, determines itself in exclusion of God.

All the promises of God are yea and amen, and God himself makes them so to be; he takes care of that matter.

§ 55. Concerning that grand objection, that this doctrine supposes partiality in God, and is very dishonorable to him, being quite contrary to God's extensive and universal benevolence to his creatures; it may be shewn that the Arminian notions and principles in this matter, lead directly to Deism; and that on these principles, it is utterly impossible to answer Tindal's objections against revealed religion, especially in his 14th chapter. Besides, unjustifiable partiality is not imputable to a sovereign distributing his favors, though ever so unequally, unless it be done unwisely, and so as to infringe the common good.

§ 56. God has regard to conditions in his decrees, as he has regard to a wise order and connexion of things. Such is his wisdom in his decrees, and all his acts and operations, that if it were not for wise connexion that is regarded, many things would not be decreed. One part of the wise system of events would not have been decreed, unless the other parts had been decreed, &c.

§ 57. God in the decree of election is justly to be considered as decreeing the creature's eternal happiness, antecedently to any foresight of good works, in a sense wherein he does not in reprobation decree the creature's eternal misery, antecedently to any foresight of sin; because the being of

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sin is supposed in the first place in order to the decree of reprobation, which is, that God will glorify his vindictive justice; and the very notion of revenging justice, simply considered, supposes a fault to be revenged. But faith and good works are not supposed in the first place in order to the decree of election. The first things in order in this decree are, that God will communicate his happiness, and glorify his grace; (for these two seem to be coordinate.) But in neither of these are faith and good works supposed. For when God decrees, and seeks to communicate his own happiness in the creature's happiness, the notion of this, simply considered, supposes or implies nothing of faith or good works; nor does the notion of grace, in itself, suppose any such thing. It does not necessarily follow from the very nature of grace, or God's communicativeness of his own happiness, that there must be faith and good works. This is only a certain way of the appointment of God's wisdom, wherein he will bring men to partake of his grace. But yet God is far from having decreed damnation from a foresight of evil works, in the sense of the Arminians, as if God in this decree did properly depend on the creature's sinful act, as an event, the coming to pass of which primarily depends on the creature's determination; so that the creature's determination in this decree may properly be looked upon as antecedent to God's determination, and on which his determination is consequent and dependent.

§ 58. What divines intend by *prior* and *posterior* in the affair of God's decrees, is not that one is before another in the order of time, for all are from eternity; but that we must conceive the view or consideration of one decree to be before another, inasmuch as God decrees one thing out of respect to another decree that he has made; so that one decree must be conceived of as in some sort to be the ground of another, or that God decrees one because of another; or that he would not have decreed one, had he not decreed that other. Now there are two ways in which divine decrees may be said to be in this sense prior one to another. 1. When one

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thing decreed is the end of another, this must in some respect be conceived of as prior to that other. The good to be obtained is in some respect prior, in the consideration of him who decrees and disposes, to the means of obtaining it. 2. When one thing decreed is the ground on which the disposer goes, in seeking such an end by another thing decreed, as being the foundation of the capableness or fitness that there is in that other thing decreed, to obtain such an end. Thus the sinfulness of the reprobate is the ground on which God goes in determining to glorify his justice in the punishment of his sinfulness; because his sinfulness is the foundation of the possibility of obtaining that end by such means. His having sin is the foundation of both the fitness and possibility of justice being glorified in the punishment of his sin, and therefore the consideration of the being of sin in the subject, must in some respect be prior in the mind of the disposer, to the determination to glorify his justice in the punishment of sin. For the disposer must first consider the capableness and aptness of such means for such an end, before he determines them to such an end.

Thus God must be conceived of, as first considering Adonibezek's cruelty in cutting off the thumbs and great toes of threescore and ten kings, as that which was to be before he decreed to glorify his justice in punishing that cruelty by the cutting off his thumbs and great toes. For God, in this last decree, has respect to the fitness and aptness of his thumbs and great toes being cut off to glorify his justice. But this aptness depends on the nature of that sin that was punished. Therefore the disposer, in fixing on those means for this end, must be conceived of as having that sin in view. Not only must God be conceived of as having some end in consideration, before he determines the means in order to that end, but he must also be conceived of as having a consideration of the capableness or aptness of the means to obtain the end before he fixes on the means. Both these, in different respects, may be said to be prior to the means decreed to such an end in the mind of the disposer. Both, in different respects, are the ground or reason of the appointment of the

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means. The end is the ground or reason of the appointment of the means; and also the capacity and fitness of the means to the end, is the ground or reason of this appointment to such an end. So both the sin of the reprobate, and also the glory of divine justice, may properly be said to be before the decree of damning the reprobate. The decree of damnation may properly be said, in different respects, to be because of both these; and that God would not have decreed the damnation of the sinner, had it not been for the respect he had both to the one and the other. Both may properly be considered as the ground of the decree of damnation. The view of the sinfulness of the reprobate must be in some respect prior in the decree, to God's decree to glorify his justice in punishing their sinfulness. Because sinfulness is necessarily supposed as already existing in the decree of punishing sinfulness, and the decree of damnation being posterior to the consideration of the sin of men in this latter respect, clears God of any injustice in such a decree. That which stands in the place of the ultimate end in a decree, i. e. that which is a mere end, and not a means to any thing further or higher, viz. the shining forth of God's glory, and the communication of his goodness, must indeed be considered as prior, in the consideration of the Supreme Disposer, to every thing excepting the mere possibility of it. But this must in some respects be conceived of as prior to that, because possibility is necessarily supposed in his decree. But if we descend lower than the highest end; if we come down to other events decreed, that be not more ends, but means to obtain that end, then we must necessarily bring in more things, as in some respect prior, in the same manner as mere possibility is in this highest decree. Because more things must necessarily be supposed or considered as existing in the decree, in order that those things which are decreed may reach the end for which they are decreed. More things must be supposed in order to a possibility of these things taking place as subordinate to their end; and therefore they stand in the same place, in these lower decrees, as absolute possibility does in the decree of the highest end. The vindictive jus-

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tice of God is not to be considered as a mere or ultimate end, but as a means to that end. Indeed, God's glorifying his justice, or rather his glorifying his holiness and greatness, has the place of a mere and ultimate end. But his glorifying his justice in punishing sin, (or in exercising vindictive justice, which is the same) is not to be considered as a mere end, but a certain way or means of obtaining an end. Vindictive justice is not to be considered as a certain, distinct attribute to be glorified, but as a certain way and means for the glorifying an attribute. Every distinct way of God's glorifying or exercising an attribute, might as well be called a distinct attribute as this. It is but giving a distinct name to it, and so we might multiply attributes without end. The considering of the glorifying of vindictive justice as a mere end has led to great misrepresentations, and undue and unhappy expressions about the decree of reprobation. Hence the glorifying of God's vindictive justice on such particular persons has been considered as altogether prior in the decree to their sinfulness, yea to their very beings. Whereas it being only a means to an end, those things that are necessarily presupposed, in order to the fitness and possibility of this means of obtaining the end, must be conceived of as prior to it.

Hence God's decree of the eternal damnation of the reprobate is not to be conceived of as prior to the fall, yea, and to the very being of the persons, as the decree of the eternal glory of the elect is. For God's glorifying his love, and communicating his goodness, stands in the place of a mere or ultimate end, and therefore is prior in the mind of the eternal disposer to the very being of the subject, and to every thing but mere possibility. The goodness of God gives the being as well as the happiness of the creature, and does not presuppose it. Indeed, the glorifying of God's mercy, as it presupposes the subject to be miserable, and the glorifying his grace, as it presupposes the subject to be sinful, unworthy and illdeserving, are not to be conceived of as ultimate ends, but only as certain ways and means for the glorifying the exceeding abundance and overflowing fulness of God's goodness and love; therefore these decrees are not to be consid-

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cred as prior to the decree of the being and permission of the fall of the subject. And the decree of election, as it implies a decree of glorifying God's mercy and grace, considers men as being cursed and fallen; because the very notion of such a decree supposes sin and misery. Hence we may learn, how much in the decree of predestination is to be considered as prior to the creation and fall of man, and how much as posterior; viz. that God's decree to glorify his love and communicate his goodness, and to glorify his greatness and holiness, is to be considered as prior to creation and the fall of man. And because the glory of God's love, and the communication of his goodness necessarily imply the happiness of the creature, and give both their being and happiness; hence the design to communicate and glorify his goodness and love eternally to a certain number, is to be considered as prior, in both those mentioned respects, to their being and fall. For such a design, in the notion of it, presupposes neither. But nothing in the decree of reprobation is to be looked upon as antecedent in one of those respects to man's being and fall; but only that general decree that God will glorify his justice, or rather his holiness and greatness, which supposes neither their being nor sinfulness. But whatsoever there is in this decree of evil to particular subjects, it is to be considered as consequent on the decree of their creation, and permission of their fall. And indeed, although all that is in the decree of election, all that respects good to the subjects, be not posterior to the being and fall of men, yet both the decree of election and rejection or reprobation, as so styled, must be considered as consequent on the decrees concerning the creation and fall. For both these decrees have respect to that distinction or discrimination that is afterwards actually made amongst men in pursuance of these decrees. Hence effectual calling, being the proper execution of election, is sometimes in scripture called election; and the rejection of men in time is called reprobation. Therefore the decrees of election and reprobation must be looked upon as beginning there, where the actual distinction begins, because distinction is implied in the notion of those decrees. And therefore,

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whatsoever is prior to this actual distinction, the foresight of it, and decree concerning it, or that state that was common, or wherein they were undistinguished, the foresight of that, or decree concerning it, must be considered, in some respect, as prior to the decree concerning the distinction. Because all that is before is supposed or looked upon as already put in the decree. For that is the decree, viz. to make such a distinction between those that were before in such a common state. And this is agreeable to the scripture representations of those decrees, John xv. 19. "Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." See also Ezek. xvi. 1....8.

The decrees of God must be conceived of in the same order, and as antecedent to, and consequent on one another, in the same manner, as God's acts in the execution of those decrees. If this will not hold, with regard to those things that are the effects of those acts, yet certainly it will hold with respect to the acts themselves. They depend on one another, and are grounded on one another, in the same manner as the decrees that these are the execution of, and in no other. For, on the one hand, the decrees of God are no other than his eternal doing what is done, acted or executed by him in time. On the one hand, God's acts themselves, in executing, can be conceived of no otherwise, than as decrees for a present effect. They are acts of Gods will. God brings things to pass only by acts of his will. He speaks, and it is done. His will says, let it be, and it is. And this act of his will that now is, cannot be looked upon as really different from that act of will that was in him before, and from eternity, in decreeing that this thing should be at this time. It differs only relatively. Here is no new act of the will in God, but only the same acts of God's will, which before, because the time was not come, respected future time; and so were called decrees. But now the time being come, they respect present time, and so are not called by us decrees, but acts executing decrees. Yet they are evidently the same acts in God. Therefore those acts, in executing, must certainly be conceived of in the same order, and with the same dependence, as the decrees them-

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selves. It may be in some measure illustrated by this....The decree of God or the will of God decreeing events, may be represented as a straight line of infinite length, that runs through all past eternity, and terminates in the event. The last point in the line, is the act of God's will in bringing the event to pass, and does not at all differ from all the other points throughout the infinite length of the line, in any other respect but this, that this last point is next to the event. This line may be represented as in motion, but yet always kept parallel to itself. The hither end of the line, by its motion, describes events in the order in which they come to pass; or at least represents God's acts in bringing the events to pass, in their order and mutual dependence, antecedence and consequence. By the motion of all the other points of the line, before the event or end of the line, in the whole infinite length of it, are represented the decrees in their order; which, because the line in all its motions is kept parallel to itself, is exactly the same with the order of the motions of the last point. For the motion of every point of the whole line, is in all respects, just like the motion of that last point wherein the line terminates in the event; and the different parts of the motion of every point, are in every respect precisely in the same order. And the maxim, that what is first in intention, is last in execution, does not in the least concern this matter. For, by last in execution, is meant only last in order of time, without any respect to the priority or posteriority that we are speaking of; and it does not at all hinder, but that in God's acts, in executing his decrees, one act is the ground or reason of another act, in the same manner precisely as the decree that related to it was the ground or reason of the other decree. The absolute independence of God, no more argues against some of God's decrees being grounded on decrees of some other things that should first come to pass, than it does against some of God's acts in time, being grounded on some other antecedent acts of his. It is just the same with God's acts in executing, as has been said already of his decreeing. In one respect, the end that is afterwards to be accomplished, is the ground of God's acting; in another respect, something

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that is already accomplished, is the ground of his acting, as it is the ground of the fitnesss or capableness of the act to obtain the end. There is nothing but the ultimate end of all things, viz. God's glory, and the communication of his goodness, that is prior to all first acts in creating the world, in one respect and mere possibility in another. But, with respect to after acts, other ends are prior in one respect, and other preceding acts are prior in another, just as I have shewn it to be with respect to God's decrees. Now, this being established, it may help more clearly to illustrate, and fully to evince, what we have insisted on concerning the order of the decrees, and that God's decrees of some things that are accomplished first in order of time, are also prior in the order, so as to be the proper ground and reason of other decrees. For, let us see how it is in God's acts in executing his decrees. Will any deny, that God's act in rewarding righteousness, is grounded on a foregoing act of his in giving righteousness? And that he rewards righteousness in such a person, because he hath given righteousness to such a person; and that because this latter act necessarily supposes the former act foregoing? So, in like manner, God's decree, in determining to reward righteousness, is grounded on an antecedent decree to give righteousness, because the former decree necessarily supposes the latter decree, and implies it in the very notion of it. So, who will deny, but that God's act in punishing sin, is grounded on what God hath antecedently done in permitting sin, or suffering it to be, because the former necessarily supposes the latter, and therefore that the actual permission of sin is prior, in the order of nature, to the punishment of it? So that whatever foregoing act of God is in any respect a ground and reason of another succeeding act, so far is both the act, and decree of the act, prior to both that other act and decree.

It may be objected to this, that if so, the decree of bestowing salvation on an elect soul, is founded on the decree of bestowing faith on him; for God actually bestows salvation in some respect, because he has bestowed faith; and this would be to make the decree of election succedaneous to the decree of giving faith, as well as that of reprobation consequent on

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the decree of permitting sin. To this I answer, that both God's act, and also his decree of bestowing salvation on such a fallen creature, is in some respects, grounded on God's act and decree of giving faith, but in no wise as the decree or act of eternal punishing is grounded on sin, because punishment necessarily presupposes sin, so that it could not be without it. But the decreeing and giving the happiness of the elect, is not so founded on faith. The case is very different. For with respect to eternal punishment, it may be said that God would not, yea, could not, have decreed or executed it, had he not decreed and permitted sin; but it cannot be said, either that God could not, or would not, have decreed or bestowed the eternal happiness of the elect, unless he had decreed and given faith. Indeed, the salvation of an elect soul is, in this respect, grounded on the decree of giving faith as God's decree of bestowing happiness on the elect in this particular way, as a fallen creature, and by the righteousness of Christ made his own, by being heartily received and closed with, is grounded on the decree of bestowing faith in Christ, because it presupposes it, as the act that answers to this decree does. But the decree of bestowing happiness in general, which we conceive of as antecedent to this act, presupposes no such thing; nor does just so much without any more in execution presuppose faith, or indeed the righteousness of Christ, or any act or suffering of a mediator, or even the fall of man. And the decree of God's communicating his goodness to such a subject, does not so much as presuppose the being of the subject, because it gives being. But there is no decree of evil to such a subject which can be conceived of as antecedent to a decree of punishment. For the first decree of evil or suffering, implies that in it. For there is no evil decreed for any other end, but the glory of God's justice. Therefore the decree of the permission of sin is prior to all other things in the decree of reprobation. Due distinctions seem not to have been observed, in asserting that all the decrees of God are unconditional; which has occasioned difficulties in controversies about the decrees. There are no conditional decrees in this sense, viz. that decrees should

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depend on things as conditions of them, which in this decree, that depends on them as conditions, must be considered, like themselves, as yet undecreed. But yet decrees may, in some sort, be conditions of decrees; so that it may be said, that God would not have decreed some things, had he not decreed others.

§ 59. The objection to the divine decrees will be, that according to this doctrine, God may do evil, that good may come of it.

Ans. I do not argue that God may commit evil, that good may come of it; but that he may will that evil should come to pass, and permit that it may come to pass, that good may come of it. It is in itself absolutely evil, for any being to commit evil that good may come of it; but it would be no evil, but good, even in a creature, to will that evil should come to pass, if he had wisdom sufficient to see certainly that good would come of it, or that more good would come to pass in that way than in any other. And the only reason why it would not be lawful for a creature to permit evil to come to pass, and that it would not be wise, or good and virtuous in him so to do, is, that he has not perfect wisdom and sufficiency, so as to render it fit that such an affair should be trusted with him. In so doing he goes beyond his line; he goes out of his province; he meddles with things too high for him. It is every one's duty to do things fit for him in his sphere, and commensurate to his power. God never intrusted this providence in the hands of creatures of finite understandings, nor is it proper that he should.

If a prince were of perfect and allcomprehensive wisdom and foresight, and he should see that an act of treason would be for the great advancement of the welfare of his kingdom, it might be wise and virtuous in him to will that such act of treason should come to pass; yea, it would be foolish and wrong if he did not; and it would be prudent and wise in him not to restrain the traitor, but to let him alone to go on in the way he chose. And yet he might hate the treason at the same time, and he might properly also give forth laws at

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the same time, forbidding it upon pain of death, and might hold these laws in force against this traitor.

The Arminians themselves allow that God permits sin, and that if he permits it, it will come to pass. So that the only difficulty about the act of the will that is in it, is that God should will evil to be, that good may come of it. But it is demonstrably true, that if God sees that good will come of it, and more good than otherwise, so that when the whole series of events is viewed by God, and all things balanced, the sum total of good with the evil, is more than without it, all being subtracted that needs be subtracted, and added that is to be added; if the sum total of good thus considered, be greatest, greater than the sum in any other case, then it will follow that God, if he be a wise and holy being, must will it.

For if this sum total that has evil in it, when what the evil subtracts is subtracted, has yet the greatest good in it, then it is the best sum total, better than the other sum total that has no evil in it. But if, all things considered, it be really the best, how can it be otherwise than that it should be chosen by an infinitely wise and good being, whose holiness and goodness consists in always choosing what is best? Which does it argue most, wisdom or folly, a good disposition or an evil one, when two things are set before a being, the one better and the other worse, to choose the worse, and refuse the better?

§ 60. There is no inconsistency or contrariety between the decretive and preceptive will of God. It is very consistent to suppose that God may hate the thing itself, and yet will that it should come to pass. Yea, I do not fear to assert that the thing itself may be contrary to God's will, and yet that it may be agreeable to his will that it should come to pass, because his will, in the one case, has not the same object with his will in the other case. To suppose God to have contrary wills towards the same object, is a contradiction; but it is not so, to suppose him to have contrary wills about different objects. The thing itself, and that the thing should come to pass, are different, as is evident; because it is possible that

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the one may be good and the other may be evil. The thing itself may be evil, and yet it may be a good thing that it should come to pass. It may be a good thing that an evil thing should come to pass; and oftentimes it most certainly and undeniably is so, and proves so.

§ 61. Objectors to the doctrine of election may say, God cannot always preserve men from sinning, unless he destroy their liberty. But will they deny that an omnipotent, an infinitely wise God, could possibly invent and set before men such strong motives to obedience, and keep them before them in such a manner as should influence them to continue in their obedience, as the elect angels have done, without destroying their liberty? God will order it so that the saints and angels in heaven never will sin, and does it therefore follow that their liberty is destroyed, and that they are not free, but forced in their actions? Does it follow that they are turned into machines and blocks, as the Arminians say the Calvinistic doctrines turn men?

§ 62. To conclude this discourse; I wish the reader to consider the unreasonableness of rejecting plain revelations, because they are puzzling to our reason. There is no greater difficulty attending this doctrine than the contrary, nor so great. So that though the doctrine of the decrees be mysterious, and attended with difficulties, yet the opposite doctrine is in itself more mysterious, and attended with greater difficulties, and with contradictions to reason more evident, to one who thoroughly considers things; so that, even if the scripture had made no revelation of it, we should have had reason to believe it. But since the scripture is so abundant in declaring it, the unreasonableness of rejecting it appears the more glaring.

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CONCERNING

EFFICACIOUS GRACE.

§ 1. IT is manifest that the scripture supposes, that if ever men are turned from sin, God must undertake it, and he must be the doer of it; that it is his doing that must determine the matter; that all that others can do, will avail nothing, without his agency. This is manifest by such texts as these, Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; Thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh," &c. Lam. v. 21. "Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned."

§ 2. According to Dr. Whitby's notion of the assistance of the Spirit, the Spirit of God does nothing in the hearts or minds of men beyond the power of the devil; nothing but what the devil can do; and nothing shewing any greater power in any respect, than the devil shews and exercises in his temptations. For he supposes that all that the Spirit of God does, is to bring moral motives and inducements to mind, and set them before the understanding, &c. It is possible that God may infuse grace, in some instances, into the minds of such persons as are striving to obtain it in the other way, though they may not observe it, and may not know that it is not obtained by gradual acquisition. But if a man has indeed sought it only in that way, and with as much dependence on himself, and with as much neglect of God in his endeavors and prayers, as such a doctrine naturally leads to, it is not very likely that he should obtain saving grace by the efficacious, mighty power of God. It is most likely that God

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should bestow this gift in a way of earnest attention to divine truth, and the use of the means of grace, with reflection on one's own sinfulness, and in a way of being more and more convinced of sinfulness, and total corruption and need of the divine power to restore the heart, to infuse goodness, and of becoming more and more sensible of one's own impotence, and helplessness and inability to obtain goodness by his own strength. And if a man has obtained no other virtue, than what seems to have been wholly in that gradual and insensible way that might be expected from use and custom, in the exercise of his own strength, he has reason to think, however bright his attainments may seem to be, that he has no saving virtue.

§ 3. Great part of the gospel is denied by those who deny pure efficacious grace. They deny that wherein actual salvation and the application of redemption mainly consists; and how unlikely are such to be successful in their endeavors after actual salvation?

§ 4. Turnbull's explanation of Philip. ii. 12. 13. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure," is this, (*Christian philosophy*, p. 96, 97.) "Give all diligence to work out your salvation; for it is God the Creator of all things, who, by giving you, of his good pleasure, the power of willing and doing, with a sense of right and wrong, and reason to guide and direct you, hath visibly made it your end so to do. Your frame shews, that to prepare yourselves for great moral happiness, arising from a well cultivated and improved mind, suitably placed, is your end appointed to you by your Creator. Consider, therefore, that by neglecting this your duty, this your interest, you contemn and oppose the *good will of God towards you, and his design in creating you.*"

§ 4. If we look through all the examples we have of conversion in scripture, the conversion of the Apostle Paul,

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and of the Corinthians, ("Such were some of you, but ye are washed," &c.) and all others that the apostles write to, how far were they from this gradual way of conversion, by contracted habits, and by 'such culture as Turnbull speaks of? Turnbull, in his *Christian Philosophy*, p. 470, seems to think, that the sudden conversions that were in the apostles' days, were instances of their miraculous power, as in these words, "They appealed to the works they wrought, to the samples they gave of their power to foretel future events; their power to cure instantaneously all diseases of the body; their power to cure, in the same extraordinary manner, all diseases of the mind, or to convert bad into good dispositions; their power to bestow gifts and blessings of all sorts, bodily and spiritual." See again to the like purpose, p. 472.

Now I would inquire, whether those who thus had the diseases of their minds cured, and their bad converted into good dispostions, had any virtue; or whether those good dispositions of their's were virtues, or any thing praiseworthy; and whether, when they were thus converted, they became good men, and the heirs of salvation? As Turnbull himself allows, all that are not good men, were called the children of the devil in scripture; and he asserts that nothing is virtue, but what is obtained by our own culture; that no habit is virtuous, but a contracted one, one that is owing to ourselves, our own diligence, &c. and also holds, that none are good men but the virtuous; none others are the heirs of future happiness.

§ 5. What God wrought for the Apostle Paul and other primitive Christians, was intended for a pattern to all future ages, for their instruction and excitement; Eph. ii. 7. 1 Tim. i. 16. It is natural to expect, that the first fruits of the church specially recorded in history, and in that book which is the steady rule of the church in all things pertaining to salvation, should be a pattern to after ages in those things, those privileges, which equally concern all. Or if it be said, that as soon as men take up a strong resolution, they are accepted

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and looked upon by God as penitents and converts; it may be inquired, is there a good man without good habits, or principles of virtue and goodness in his heart?

§ 6. Turnbull speaks of good men as born again; i. e. changed by culture; *Christian Philosophy*, p. 282. Is there a good man without such principles as love to God and men, or charity, humility, &c? How comes that resolution to be so good, if no principle of virtue be exercised in it?

If it be said, Paul was a good man before he was converted, it may be answered, he did not believe in Christ, and therefore was in a state of condemnation. Besides, he speaks of himself as being then a wicked man.

§ 7. Concerning the supposition advanced by Bishop Butler, and by Turnbull in his *Christian Philosophy*, that all that God does, even miracles themselves, are wrought according to general laws, such as are called the laws of nature, though unknown to us; and the supposition of Turnbull, that all may be done by angels acting by general laws, I observe, this seems to be unreasonable. If angels effect these works, acting only by general laws, then they must do them without any immediate, special interposition at all, even without the smallest intimation of the divine mind, what to do, or upon what occasion God would have any thing to be done. And what will this doctrine bring inspiration to, which is one kind of miracle? According to this, all significations of the divine mind, even to the prophets and apostles, must be according to general laws, without any special interposition at all of the divine agency.

§ 8. Acts xii. 23. God was so angry with Herod for not giving him the glory of his eloquence, that the angel of the Lord smote him immediately, and he died a miserable death; he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost. But if it be very sinful for a man to take to himself the glory of such a qualification as eloquence, how much more a man's taking to himself the glory of divine grace, God's own image, and that

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which is infinitely God's most excellent, precious and glorious gift, and man's highest honor, excellency and happiness, whereby he is partaker of the divine nature, and becomes a godlike creature? If God was so jealous for the glory of so small a gift, how much more for so high an endowment, this being that alone, of all other things, by which man becomes like God? If man takes the glory of it to himself he thereby will be in the greatest danger of taking the glory to himself that is due to God, and of setting up himself as standing in competition with God, as vying with the Most High, and making himself a god, and not a man. If not giving God the glory of that which is least honorable, provokes God's jealousy; much more must not giving God the glory of that which is infinitely the most honorable. It is allowed, the apostle insists upon it, that the primitive Christians should be sensible that the glory of their gifts belonged to God, and that they made not themselves to differ. But how small a matter is this, if they make themselves to differ in that, which the apostle says is so much more excellent than all gifts?

§ 9. How much more careful has God shewn himself, that men should not be proud of their virtue, than of any other gift? See Deut. ix, 4. Luke xviii. 9, and innumerable other places. And the apostle plainly teaches us to ascribe to God the glory, not only of our redemption, but of our wisdom, righteousness and sanctification; and that no flesh should glory in themselves in these things, 1 Cor. i. 29, 30, 31. Again, the apostle plainly directs, that all that glory in their virtue, should glory in the Lord, 2 Cor. x. 17. It is glorying in virtue and virtuous deeds he is there speaking of; and it is plain, that the apostle uses the expression of glorying in the Lord, in such a sense, as to imply ascribing the glory of our virtue to God.

§ 10. The doctrine of men's being the determining causes of their own virtue, teaches them, not to do so much, as even the proud Pharisee did, who thanked God for making him to differ from other men in virtue, Luke xviii.

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See Gen. xli. 15, 16. Job xi. 12. Dan. ii. 25, &c. 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6. 2 Cor. iv. 7. 2 Cor. x. 17.

Proverbs xx. 12. "The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made, even both of them;" compared with many parallel places that speak about God's giving eyes to see, and ears to hear, and hearts to understand, &c.

§ 11. The Arminian doctrine, and the doctrine of our new philosophers, concerning habits of virtue being only by custom, discipline, and gradual culture, joined with the other doctrine, that the obtaining of these habits in those that have time for it, is in every man's power, according to their doctrine of the freedom of will, tends exceedingly to cherish presumption in sinners, while in health and vigor, and tends to their utter despair, in sensible approaches of death by sickness or old age.

§ 12. Observe that the question with some is, whether the Spirit of God does any thing at all in these days, since the scriptures have been completed. With those that allow that he does any thing, the question cannot be, whether his influence be immediate; for, if he does any thing at all, his influence must be immediate. Nor can the question be, whether his influence, with regard to what he intends to do, be efficacious.

The questions relating to efficacious grace, controverted between us and the Arminians, are two: 1. Whether the grace of God, in giving us saving virtue, be determining and decisive. 2. Whether saving virtue be decisively given by a supernatural and sovereign operation of the Spirit of God; or, whether it be only by such a divine influence or assistance, as is imparted in the course of common providence, either according to established laws of nature, or established laws of God's universal providence towards mankind; *i. e.* either, 1. Assistance which is given in all natural actions, wherein men do merely exercise and improve the principles of nature and laws of nature, and come to such attainments as are connected with such exercises by the mere laws of nature. For there is an assistance in all such natural actions; because

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it is by a divine influence that the laws of nature are upheld; and a constant concurrence of divine power is necessary in order to our living, moving, or having a being. This we may call a natural assistance. Or, 2. That assistance, which, though it be something besides the upholding of the laws of nature, (which take place in all affairs of life) is yet, by a divine, universal constitution in this particular affair of religion, so connected with those voluntary exercises which result from this mere natural assistance, that by this constitution it indiscriminately extends to all mankind, and is certainly connected with such exercises and improvements, as those just mentioned, by a certain, established, known rule, as much as any of the laws of nature. This kind of assistance, though many Arminians call it a supernatural assistance, differs little or nothing from that natural assistance that is established by a law of nature. The law so established, is only a particular law of nature; as some of the laws of nature are more general, others more particular: But this establishment, which they suppose to be by divine promise, differs nothing at all from many other particular laws of nature, except only in this circumstance, of the established constitutions, being revealed in the word of God, while others are left to be discovered only by experience.

The Calvinists suppose otherwise; they suppose that divine influence and operation, by which saving virtue is obtained, is entirely different from, and above common assistance, or that which is given in a course of ordinary providence, according to universally established laws of nature. They suppose a principal of saving virtue is immediately imparted and implanted by that operation, which is sovereign and efficacious in this respect, that its effect proceeds not from any established laws of nature. I mention this as an entirely different question from the other, *viz.* Whether the grace of God, by which we obtain saving virtue, is determining or decisive. For that it may be, if it be given wholly in a course of nature, or by such an operation as is limited and regulated perfectly according to established, invariable laws. For none will dispute that many things are brought to pass by God in this man-

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ner, that are decisively offered by him, and are brought to pass by his determining providence.

The controversy, as it relates to efficacious grace, in this sense, includes in it these four questions.

1. Whether saving virtue differs from common virtue, or such virtue as those have that are not in a state of salvation, in nature and kind, or only in degree and circumstances?

2. Whether a holy disposition of heart, as an internal, governing principle of life and practice, be immediately implanted or infused in the soul, or only be contracted by repeated acts, and obtained by human culture and improvement?

3. Whether conversion, or the change of a person from being a vicious or wicked man, to a truly virtuous character, be instantaneous or gradual?

4. Whether the divine assistance or influence, by which men obtain true and saving virtue, be sovereign and arbitrary, or, whether God, in giving this assistance and its effects, limits himself to certain exact and stated rules, revealed in his word, and established by his promises?

§ 13. Eph. i. 19, 20. "What is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward, according to the working of his mighty power," or the effectual working, as the word signifies.... These words, *according to the effectual working of his power*, we shall find applied to conversion, to growth in grace, and to raising us up at last. You have them applied to conversion, Eph. iii. 7. "Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God, given to me, by the *effectual working of his power*."....So likewise to growth in grace, Eph. iv. 10. "The whole body increaseth with the increase of God, by the *effectual working* in the measure of every part."....And to the resurrection to glory at the last day, Philip. iii. 21. "He will change our vile bodies, according to the *effectual working* of his mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself."

And that the power of God in conversion, or in giving faith and the spiritual blessings that attend it, is here meant, may be argued from the apostle's change of phrase, that

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whereas in the foregoing verse, he spoke of the riches of the glory of Christ's inheritance in the saints, he does not go on to say, "and what is the exceeding greatness of his power towards them," (i. e. the saints) which surely would have been most natural, if he still had respect only to the power of God in bestowing the inheritance of future glory. But, instead of that, we see he changes the phrase; "and what is the exceeding greatness of his power *to usward who believe*;" plainly intimating some kind of change of the subject, or a respect to the subject of salvation with regard to something diverse; that whereas before he spoke of saints in their future state only, now he speaks of something that the saints, we that dwell in this world that believe, are the subjects of. And as the apostle includes himself, so it is the more likely he should have the mighty power of God in conversion in his thought; his conversion having been so visible and remarkable an instance of God's marvellous power.

Again, the apostle, in praying that they "knowing the exceeding greatness of God's power," &c. prays for such a knowledge and conviction of the power of God to bring them to life and glory, which was a most special remedy against such doubts as the church in the then present state was most exposed to, viz. that of their being preserved to glory and salvation through all their trials, persecutions, and the great opposition that was made by the enemies of Christ and their souls. Therefore, after mentioning the glory of their inheritance, he, for their comfort and establishment, mentions the power of God to bring them to the possession of this inheritance, as the apostle Peter does, 1 Peter i. 4, 5. "To an inheritance incorruptible....who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." He speaks to their hearts, for here was their difficulty and temptation to doubting. But if the keeping them in faith shewed such great power, much more did the first bringing them from heathenism and the power of sin, darkness, and spiritual death and ruin, into a state of faith and salvation, quickening them when dead in trespasses and sins; as it is a greater instance of divine power to raise the dead, than to maintain life that is exposed to

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danger; a greater work to reconcile us being enemies, than to keep us friends being reconciled. It was natural for the apostle to put them in mind of the power of God manifested in their conversion, as he would strengthen their faith in his power to raise them at the last day, and glorify them to eternity. Dr. Goodwin says, he finds most of the Greek fathers ran this way in interpreting the place. He mentions Theophylact and Chrysostom, and cites these words of Chrysostom: "The apostle's scope is to demonstrate by what already was manifested in them, viz. the power of God in working faith, and to raise up their hearts to believe what was not manifested, viz. the raising of them from death to life. It being (saith he) a far more wonderful work to persuade a soul to believe in Christ, than to raise up a dead man, a far more admirable work of the two." Besides, what the apostle says in the continuation of his discourse, explains his meaning, and puts the matter of his intending to include the power of God manifested in their conversion, out of all doubt, as, in the very next sentence, "and you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;" and every word that follows, to the end of the second chapter, confirms the same thing. I shall mention a few of them: Verse 2. "Wherein in time past ye walked....according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh effectually in the children of disobedience." This shews the exceeding greatness of power in their being delivered from such a state, wherein they were held by the great power of so strong an enemy. Verses 5 and 6. "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together in Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." These things tend to shew how the power of God in their conversion, and the happy, honorable, and glorious change of their state by it, was according to the power that wrought in Christ when he was quickened, raised up, and made to sit in heavenly places, as chap. i. 19, 20, 21. Now, to back this with a parallel place, as here in this place the apostle speaks of the greatness of God's power in working faith, and parallels it with the power that raised up Christ

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from the dead; so we find he says the very same thing in Colossians ii. 12, 13. "Ye are buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." In that text in Ephesians the apostle speaks of faith, *the power that works in us that believe.* So in this text in Colossians, *ye are risen through faith.* Again, 2dly, in Ephesians, together with what there follows, chap. ii. he compareth believing to a rising from the dead. So here in Colossians, *ye are risen with him through faith.* Thirdly, as in Ephesians the apostle speaks of the work of God in giving faith, as parallel with his work in raising Christ, so he does here in Colossians: "Ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him, from the dead." Fourthly, as we in Ephesians are said to believe, according to the efficacious working of God, the word ἐνεργεια is also used here in Colossians. It is called faith of the operation, or effectual working of God, and as there God is said to be the author, the same that raised up Christ, and to work faith in them; so here it is the faith of the operation of God who raised Christ from the dead, so that, every way, one place is parallel with the other.

Some pretend, that in that expression, *through the faith of the operation of God*, there is no respect to God's operation as the efficient cause of faith, but only to the operation of God that raised Christ as the object of faith, which believes that power and operation as it was manifested in raising Christ, and which is believed to be sufficient to raise us up also. But that the apostle means the operation of God in giving faith, appears by verse 11, which introduces these words, where the apostle says, "In whom ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." This phrase, *made without hands*, in scripture, always denotes God's immediate power, above the course of nature, and above second causes. Thus, when he speaks of heaven, 2 Cor. v. 1, he calls it "an house not made with hands," and in Heb. ix. 11, the human nature of Christ, which was fram-

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ed by so wonderful and supernatural a power of the Holy Ghost, is said to be a "tabernacle made without hands."

NOTE. The foregoing remarks concerning the texts in Eph. i. 19, 20, and in Coloss. ii. 11, 12, 13, are taken chiefly from Dr. Goodwins's works, vol. 1, p. 298, &c.

§ 14. It is a doctrine mightily in vogue, that God has promised his saving grace to men's sincere endeavors in praying for it, and using proper means to obtain it; and so that it is not God's mere will that determines the matter, whether we shall have saving grace or not; but that the matter is left with us, to be determined by the sincerity of our endeavors.

But there is vast confusion in all talk of this kind, for want of its being well explained what is meant by sincerity of endeavor, and through men's deceiving themselves by using words without a meaning. I think the scripture knows of but one sort of sincerity in religion, and that is a truly pious or holy sincerity. The Bible suggests no notion of any other sort of sincere obedience, or any other sincerity of endeavors, or any doings whatsoever in religion, than doing from love to God and true love to our duty. As to those that endeavor and take pains, (let them do ever so much) that yet do nothing freely, or from any true love to, or delight in God, or free inclination to virtue, but wholly for byends, and from sinister and mercenary views, as being driven and forced against their inclination, or induced by regard to things foreign; I say, respecting such as these, I find nothing in scripture that should lead us to call them honest and sincere in their endeavors. I doubt not but that the scripture promises supernatural, truly divine and saving blessings, to such a sincerity of endeavor as arises from true love to our duty. But then, as I apprehend, this is only to promise more saving grace to him that seeks it in the exercise of saving grace, agreeably to that repeated saying of our Saviour, "to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundance." Persons, in seeking grace with this sincerity, ask in faith; they seek these blessings in the exercise of a saving faith, the great

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condition of the covenant of grace. And I suppose, promises are made to no sincerity, but what implies this. And whoever supposes that divine promises are made to any other sincerity than this, I imagine he never will be able to make out his scheme, and that for two reasons:

1. On such a supposition, the promises must be supposed to be made to an undetermined condition. And,

2. Even on the supposition that the promises are made to some other sincerity than a truly pious sincerity, the sovereign grace and will of God must determine the existence of the condition of the promises; and so the whole must still depend on God's determining grace.

I. On the supposition that the promises of saving grace are made to some other sincerity of endeavor than that which implies true and saving piety of heart, they must be made to an undetermined condition, and so be in effect no promises at all.

If there be any thing else worthy to be called sincerity in endeavors after holiness, but a free, pious inclination, or true regard and love to holiness, nothing better can be mentioned than this, viz. endeavors after holiness, from a real willingness of heart to put forth those endeavors for the agent's own sake, yet for such ends as prudence and selflove would propose; such as his own eternal interest, salvation from everlasting misery, &c.

So that by sincerity here, is not meant any holy freedom or virtuous disposition or desire; but it signifies no more than reality of disposition and will to endeavor for some end, only provided the end be subservient to selfpreservation. But the thing that truly in this case denominates the endeavor sincere, is the reality of the will or disposition of heart to endeavor, and not the goodness of the will or disposition. Now if this be the sincerity of endeavor which is meant, when men talk of its being the condition of peremptory and decisive promises of saving grace, then it never has (as I know of) yet been told, and I suppose, never will or can be told, what the condition of the promise is.

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The thing that needs to be determined, in order to know this condition, is, how great a degree of this sort of sincerity, or real willingness of heart to endeavor, a man must have, to be entitled to the promise. For there can be no question, but that multitudes that live in gross wickedness, and are men of a very debauched, flagitious behavior, have some degree of it; and there are none, even of those that are the most strict and painful in their endeavors, but have it in a very imperfect degree, and, in many things, fail of this sincerity of endeavor. For it must be kept in mind, that the sincerity of heart we are speaking of, attending religious duties, is only a reality of willingness to use endeavors. And every man whatsoever, that uses any endeavor at all for his salvation, or ever performs any religious duty, to the end that he may go to heaven and not to hell, has this sincerity. For whatever men do voluntarily for this end, they do from a real willingness and disposition of heart to do it; for if they were not willing to do it, they would not do it. There surely are no voluntary actions performed without men's being willing to perform them. And is there any man that will assert that God has absolutely or peremptorily promised his saving grace to any man that ever stirs hand or foot, or thinks one thought, in order to his salvation?

And on the other hand, as to those that go farthest in their endeavors, still they fail, in numberless instances, of exercising this kind of sincerity, consisting in reality of will. For such are guilty of innumerable sins; and every man that commits sin, by so doing, instead of being sincerely willing to do his duty, sincerely wills the contrary. For so far as any actions of his are his sin, so far his will is in what he does. No action is imputed to us any further than it is voluntary, and involves the real disposition of the heart. The man, in this painful endeavor, fails continually of his duty, or (which is the same thing) of perfect obedience. And so far as he does so, he fails of sincerity of endeavor. No man is any farther defective in his obedience, than as he is defective in sincerity; for there the defect lies, viz. in his will, and the disposition of his heart. If men were perfect in these,

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that would be the same thing as to be perfect in obedience, or complete in holiness. Nothing, either of omission or commission, is sin, any farther than it includes the real disposition and will; and therefore, no men are any farther sinful, than as they are sincere in sinning; and so far as they are sincere in sinning, so far they are deficient of sincerely endeavoring their duty. Now, therefore, where are the bounds to which men must come in order to be entitled to the promise? Some have a faint sincerity of endeavor, who none do suppose are entitled to the promise. And those that have most sincerity, of endeavor, do greatly fail of that degree of sincerity that they ought to have, or fall short of that which God requires. And there are infinite degrees between these two classes. And if every degree of strength of endeavor is not sufficient, and yet some certain degree of it, greatly short of that which God requires, is sufficient, then let it be determined what that degree is.

Some have determined thus, that if men sincerely endeavor to do what they can, God has promised to help them to do more, &c. But this question remains to be resolved, whether the condition of the promise be, that he shall sincerely endeavor to do what he can, constantly, or only sometimes. For there is no man that sincerely endeavors to do his duty to the utmost constantly, with this sort of sincerity consisting in reality of will so to do. If he did, he would perfectly do his duty at all times. For, as was observed before, nothing else is required but the will; and men never fail of their duty, or commit sin, but when their real will is to sin.

But if the condition of the promise, be sincerely doing what they can sometimes, then it should be declared how often, or how great a part of the time of man's life, he must exercise this sincerity. It is manifest that men fail of their duty every day, yea continually; and therefore, that there is a continual defect of sincerity of endeavor in the practice of duty.

If it should be said that the condition of the promise of saving grace is, that, take one time with another, and one du-

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ty with another, the sincerity of their will should be chiefly in favor of their duty; or, in other words, that they should be sincere in endeavors to do more than half their duty, though they sincerely neglect the rest; I would inquire, where they find such promises as these in the Bible? Besides, I think it can be demonstrated, that there is not a man on earth, that ever comes up half way to what the law of God requires of him; and consequently, that there is in all more want of sincerity, than any actual possession of it. But whether it be so or no, how does it appear, that if men are sincere in endeavors with respect to more than half their duty, God has promised them saving mercy and grace, though, through a defect of their sincerity, the rest be neglected?

But if we suppose the sincerity to which divine promises are made, implies a true freedom of the heart in religious endeavors and performances, consisting in love to God and holiness, inclining our hearts to our duty for its own sake, here is something determinate and precise; as a title to the benefit promised, does not depend on any particular degree of sincerity to be found out by difficult and unsearchable rules of mathematical calculation, but on the nature of it; this sincerity being a thing of an entirely distinct nature and kind from any thing that is to be found in those men who have no interest in the promises. If men know they have this sincerity, they may know the promises are theirs, though they may be sensible they have very much of a contrary principle in their hearts, the operations of which are as real as of this. This is the only sincerity in religion that the scripture makes any account of. According to the word of God, then, and then only, is there a sincere, universal obedience, when persons love all God's commands, and love all those things wherein holiness consists, and endeavor after obedience to every divine precept, from love and of free choice. Otherwise, in scripture account, there is nothing but sincere disobedience and rebellion, without any sincerity of the contrary. For their disobedience is of free choice, from sincere love to sin, and delight in wickedness. But their refraining from some

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sins, and performing some external duties, is without the least degree of free choice or sincere love.

If here it should be said, that men who have no piety of heart in a saving degree, yet may have some degree of love to virtue; and it should be insisted that mankind are born with a moral sense, which implies a natural approbation of, and love to virtue; and therefore, men that have not the principle of love to God and virtue established to that degree as to be truly pious men, and entitled to heaven, yet may have such degrees of them as to engage them, with a degree of ingenuous sincerity and free inclination, to seek after farther degrees of virtue, and so with a sincerity above that which has been mentioned, viz. a real willingness to use endeavors from fear and selfinterest....It may be replied, If this be allowed, it will not at all help the matter. For still the same question returns, viz. what degree of this sincerity is it, that constitutes the precise condition of the promise? It is supposed that all mankind have this moral sense; but yet it is not supposed that all mankind are entitled to the promises of saving mercy. Therefore the promises depend, as above noticed, on the degree of sincerity, under the same difficulties, and with the same intricacies, and all the forementioned unfixedness and uncertainty. And other things concerning this sincerity, besides the degree of it, are undetermined, viz. how constant this degree of sincerity of endeavor must be; how long it must be continued; and how early it must be begun.

Thus, it appears that, on the supposition of God's having made any promises of saving grace to the sincere endeavors of ungodly men, it will follow, that such promises are made to an undetermined condition.

But a supposed promise to an undetermined condition, is truly no promise at all. It is absurd to talk of positive determinate promises made to something not determined, or to a condition that is not fixed in the promise. If the condition be not decided, there is nothing decisive in the affair.

If the master of a family should give forth such a pretended promise as this to his servants, "I promise, that if any of you will do something, though I tell you not what, that I will

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surely give him an inheritance among my children:" Would this be truly any promise at all?

I proceed now to observe,

II. On the supposition, that the promises of saving grace are made to some other sincerity of endeavor, than that which implies truly pious sincerity, the sovereign grace and will of God must determine the existence of the condition of the promises; and so the whole must still depend on God's determining grace; and that, of whatever kind this sincerity, short of truly pious and saving sincerity, is supposed to be; whether it consists only in a reality of will, arising from foreign motives, for a certain degree of endeavors or use of means; or whether it be a certain sincerity or reality of willingness to use endeavors, arising from a natural love of virtue. For all suppose the sincerity, to which the promises are made, to be that in which some are distinguished from others; none supposing that all mankind, without exception, have this sincerity which is the condition of the promises. Therefore, this sincerity must be a distinguishing attainment. And how is it that some attain to it, and not others? It must be in one of these two ways; either by the sovereign gift of God's will, or by their endeavors. To say the former, is to give up the point, and to own that the sovereign grace and will of God determines the existence of the condition of the promises. But if it be said, that this distinguishing sincerity of endeavor is obtained by men's own endeavor, then I ask, what sort of endeavor is it attained by? Sincere endeavor, or insincere? None will be so absurd, as to say, that this great condition of saving promises is attained to by insincere endeavors. For what tendency, either natural or moral, can the exercise of insincerity have, to produce, or attain to sincerity? But if it be said, that distinguishing sincerity of endeavor is attained to by distinguishing sincere endeavor, this is to run round in a ridiculous circle; and still the difficulty remains, and the question returns, how the distinguishing sincerity that first of all took place in the affair came to have existence, otherwise than by the determining grace of God?

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And if it be said, that there is no need of supposing any such thing as any previous, habitual sincerity, or any such sincerity going before, as shall be an established principle, but that it is sufficient that the free will does sincerely determine itself to endeavor after holiness...I answer, whether we suppose the sincerity that first entitles to the promises, to be a settled habit, or established principle or not, it does not in the least remove the difficulty, as long as it is something, in which some men are distinguished from others, that precedes the distinguishing endeavor which entitles to the promises, and is the source and spring of those endeavors. This first, distinguishing sincerity, which is the spring of the whole affair, must have existence by some means or other; and it must proceed either from some previous, sincere endeavor of the man's own, which is a contradiction; or from God, which is the point required; or it must be the effect of chance, in other words, of nothing.

If we suppose that distinguishing sincerity of endeavor by which some men are interested in the promises of saving grace, and not others, to be some certain degree of love to virtue, or any thing else in the disposition or exercise of the heart; yet it must be owned, that all men either are alike by nature, as to love to virtue, or they are not. If they are not, but some have naturally a greater love to virtue than others, and this determines some, rather than others, to the requisite sincerity of endeavor after saving grace; then God determines the affair by his sovereign will; for he, and not men themselves, determines all distinguishing qualifications or advantages that men are born with. Or if there be no difference naturally, but one man is born with the same love to virtue as another; then, how do some men first attain to more of this love to virtue than others, and so possess that distinguishing sincerity of endeavor which consists in it? To say it arises from a previous, distinguishing sincerity of endeavor, attempt, desire, or will, is a contradiction. Therefore, it must proceed from the determining grace of God; which being allowed, the great point in dispute is allowed.

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5. 15. Ephesians ii. "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Mr. Balch observes, "this text does not mean that their faith is so God's gift, as not to be of themselves, as is most evident to any who reads the original." This is certainly a great mistake. What I suppose he means, is, that the relative *that*, being of the neuter gender, and the word ΠΙΣΤΙΣ, of the feminine, they do not agree together. But if he would translate the Greek relative *that thing*, viz. the thing last spoken of, all the difficulty vanishes. *Vid. Beza in Loc.* Such scriptures as these, I Cor. xv. 10. "Not I, but the grace of God that was with me;" Gal. ii. 20. "Not I, but Christ liveth in me," prove efficacious grace. The virtuous actions of men that are rewardable, are not left to men's indifferency, without divine ordering and efficacy, so as to be possible to fail. They are often in the scripture the matter of God's promises. How often does God promise reformations? How often does God promise that great revival of religion in the latter days? Dr. Whitby seems to deny any physical influence at all of the Spirit of God on the will; and allows an influence by moral suasion and moral causes only, p. 344. This is to deny that the Spirit of God does any thing at all, except inspiring the prophets, and giving the means of grace, with God's ordination of this in his providence. If God do any thing physically, what he does must be efficacious and irresistible.

Such an assistance Dr. Whitby maintains, and, concerning it, says the following things....p. 221, 222.

1st, "Then I say it must be granted, that in raising an idea in my brain by the Holy Spirit, and the impression made upon it there, the action is truly physical. 2d, That in those actions I am wholly passive; that is, I myself do nothing formally to produce those ideas; but the good Spirit, without any operation, doth produce them in me. 3d, That these operations must be irresistible in their production, because they are immediately produced in us without our knowledge of them, and without our will, and so without those faculties by which we are enabled to act."

Though it should be allowed that God assists man with a physical assistance, and yet by an obliged and promised assistance only; then God does not do, or effect or give the thing assisted to, any more than if he operated and assisted men only according to the established laws of nature; and men may as properly be said to do it of themselves, and of their own power. The doing of the thing, is in the same manner in their power. The assistance by which God assists a drunkard that goes to the tavern, and there drinks excessively, or by which he assists an adulterer or pirate in their actions, is, that he upholds the laws of nature, the laws of the nature of the human soul, whereby it is able to perform such and such acts in such order and dependence; and the laws of the union of soul and body; and moves the body in such a stated manner in consequence of such acts of the soul, and upholds the laws of motion, and causes that there shall be such and such effects in corporeal things, and also of men's minds in consequence of such motions. All the difference is, that the assistance which he grants in the duties of religion, is according to a newer establishment than the other, according to a method established a little later; and also, that the method of assistance, in the one case, is written and revealed by way of promise or covenant, and not in the other.

But if it be said, that though God has promised assistance, yet he has not promised the exact degree, as, notwithstanding his promise, he has left himself at liberty to assist some, much more than others, in consequence of the very same endeavor. I answer, that this will prove a giving up of their whole scheme, and will infallibly bring in the Calvinistical notion of sovereign and arbitrary grace; whereby some, with the very same sincerity of endeavor, with the same degree of endeavor, and the same use of means, nay, although all things are exactly equal in both cases, both as to their persons and behavior; yet one has that success by sovereign grace and God's arbitrary pleasure, that is denied another. If God has left himself no liberty of sovereign grace in giving success to man's endeavors but his consequent assistance be always tied to such endeavors precisely, then man's success is just as

much in his own power, and is in the same way the fruit of his own doings, as the effect and fulfilment of his endeavors to commit adultery or murder; and indeed much more. For his success in those endeavors, is not tied to such endeavors, but may be providentially disappointed. Although particular motions follow such and such acts of will in such a state of body, exactly according to certain laws of nature; yet a man's success in such wickedness, is not at all tied to his endeavors by any divine establishment, as the Arminians suppose success is to man's endeavors after conversion.

For the Spirit of God, by assisting in the alleged manner, becomes not the efficient cause of those things, as the scriptures do certainly represent him. If God be not the proper bestower, author, and efficient cause of virtue, then the greatest benefits flow not from him; we are not owing to his goodness; nor have we him to thank for them.

Christ upbraids the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, that they were worse than Sodom, &c. and the Jews of that generation, that they were worse than the men of Nineveh, and the Pharisees, that the Publicans and harlots went into the kingdom of God before them. But why did he do this, if the only reason was, that the one was brought to repent by effectual grace, and the other not? (See *Whitby*, p. 169, 170, 171.) I answer, the unbelief and impenitence of those cities, of that generation, and of those Pharisees, when, on the contrary, the Publicans and Nineveh repented, and the men of Sodom would have repented, was an argument that they were worse, more perverse and hardhearted than they. Because, though repentance is owing to special efficacious assistance, yet, in his ordinary methods of proceeding with men, God is wont much more rarely to bestow it on those that are more perverse, hardhearted, and rooted in evil, than others. So much the more as their hearts are hardened, so much the less likely are they to be brought to repentance. And though there be oftentimes exceptions of particular persons, yet it still holds good as a general rule; and especially with regard to societies, nations, cities and ranks of men: So that Christ might well, from the fact that he men-

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tions, drawn an argument of the greater perverseness and stubbornness of those societies and ranks of men that he spoke of.

5. A command and a manifestation of will are not the same thing. A command does not always imply a true desire that the thing commanded should be done. So much at least is manifest by the instance of Abraham commanded to offer up Isaac. That command was not such an effect of the divine will, as the commands to believe and repent, &c.

6. Either the stronger the habitual inclination to good, the more virtuous; and the stronger the disposition to evil, the more vicious; or, if it be otherwise, then indifference or want of indignation, is essential to both virtue and vice.

7. Dr. Whitby's inconsistence appears in that one while, when he is disputing against the decree of election, he maintains that the epistles, where the apostle speaks to the elect, are not written to the converted only; because then it suits his turn that the persons addressed should not be converted. But afterwards, when disputing against efficacious grace, he maintains that 'where the apostle says, "God worketh in you both to will and to do," &c. Philip. ii. 13, he speaks only to them that are converted, p. 388. Again, when it suits the Doctor's turn, when writing about perseverance, then all whom the apostle writes to are true saints. As particularly those the apostle Peter writes to, that had *precious faith*, p. 399. And the Galatians addressed in Paul's epistle, p. 401, 402.

8. When the Psalmist prays, "Make me to go in the way of thy statutes;" is it indeed his meaning, that God would give him the general grace which he gives to all, and which is sufficient for all if they will but improve it? And is this all?

§ 20. Arminians argue that God has obliged himself to bestow a holy and saving disposition, on certain conditions, and that what is given in regeneration, is given either for natural men's asking, or for the diligent improvement of common grace; because, otherwise, it would not be our fault that we are without it, nor our virtue that we have it. But if this reasoning is just, the holy qualities obtained by the regenerate, are only the fruits of virtue, not virtues themselves; all the virtue lies in asking, and in the diligent improvement of common grace.

§ 21. Prov. xxi. 1. "The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will." This shews that the Arminian notion of liberty of will, is inconsistent with the scripture notion of God's providence and government of the world. See also Jer. xxxi. 18. "Turn me, and I shall be turned." Matth. vii. 18. "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Let us understand this how we will, it destroys the Arminian notion of liberty, and virtue and vice. For, if it means only a great difficulty, then so much the less liberty, and therefore so much the less virtue or vice. And the preceding verse would be false, which says, "every good tree bringeth forth good fruit." &c. Rom. viii. 6, 7, 8, 9. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The design of the apostle in this place, overthrows Arminian notions of liberty, virtue and vice. It appears from scripture, that God gives such assistance to virtue and virtuous acts, as to be properly a determining assistance, so as to determine the effect; which is inconsistent with the Arminian notion of liberty. The scripture shews that God's influence in the case is such, that he is the cause of the effect; He causes it to be:

Which is, that the influence determines the matter, whether it shall be or not. Otherwise innumerable expressions of scripture are exceedingly improper, and altogether without meaning.

§ 221. Dr. Whitby's notion of the assistance of the Spirit, is of the same sort with inspiration. Whereas that which I suppose is the true notion, is entirely different. Consequently their notion is much more enthusiastical, does much better agree with, and much more expose to pernicious enthusiasm, than ours. Hence we find that the grossest enthusiasts, such as Quakers and others, are generally Arminians in the doctrines of free will, &c.

§ 222. Scripture expressions are every where contrary to Arminianism, according to all use of language in the world in these days. But then they have their refuge here. They say, the ancient figures of speech are exceedingly silvered from ours; and that we in this distant age cannot judge at all of the true sense of expressions used so long ago, but by skill in antiquity, and being versed in ancient history, and critically skilled in the ancient languages; not considering, that the scriptures were written for us in these ages, on whom the ends of the world are come; yea, were designed chiefly for the latter age of the world, in which they shall have their chief, and comparatively almost all their effect. They were written for God's people in those ages, of whom at least nine hundred and ninety-nine in an hundred must be supposed incapable of such knowledge, by their circumstances and education; and nine hundred and ninety-nine in a thousand of God's people, that ever hitherto have been saved by the scriptures. It is easy, by certain methods of interpretation, to refine and criticise any book to a sense most foreign to the mind of the author.

§ 224. If God be truly unwilling that there should be any moral evil in the world, why does not he cause less moral evil to exist than really does? If it be answered, as it usual to such kind of objections, that though God is unwilling there

should be moral evil, yet he will not infringe on man's liberty, or destroy his moral agency to prevent it; then I ask, if this be all, why does God cause so much less to exist at some certain times; on the contrary, causes virtue gloriously to prevail? Other times are spoken of and promised, wherein it shall prevail yet vastly more. And this is spoken of as of God's effecting, and is abundantly so spoken of and promised, as what God would do, and none should hinder, &c.

The Arminian principles, denying the efficacious, determining grace of God, as the cause of men's virtue and piety, are wholly inconsistent with the promises and prophecies of the future flourishing of religion and virtue in the world, and never can be made consistent therewith. This flourishing of religion is spoken of as what God will effect; and is made the matter of his abundant promise; is spoken of as his glorious work, the work of his almighty power; what he will effect, and none shall hinder; what he will effect against all opposition, removing and overcoming the wickedness of men, &c.

§ 25. Dr. Stebbing says, page 104. "So much grace as is necessary to lead us to that obedience which is indispensably required in order to salvation, God will give to every one, who humbly and devoutly prays to him for it; for this is the condition, and the only condition prescribed by our Saviour, Luke ii. 9....13. "And I say unto you, ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If then, ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? ....where the promise of the Spirit is made." Here humility and devotion are mentioned as the condition of that obedience which is indispensably required in order to salvation. By that obedience which is required in order to salvation must be meant, either, 1. That sort of virtue and obedience that is requisite, or, 2. Perseverance in it. If he

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means that sort of virtue which is requisite in order to salvation; then I would ask, what sort of humility and devotion is that to which God has promised the grace which is necessary to their obtaining that virtue which is the condition of salvation? Must it not be real, sincere humility and devotion? Surely if God has promised so great a gift to any humility and devotion, it must be to that which is sincere and upright. Because that which is not sincere, is nothing; it is hypocritical, a mere shew of that which is really wanting. And it would be very unreasonable to suppose that God promises such infinite rewards to hypocrisy, which he has often declared to be abominable to him, and which only provokes him the more. But if it be true, sincere, upright humility and devotion, it is unreasonable to suppose that God makes this the condition of that grace which is necessary to his obtaining that kind of virtue which is requisite to salvation. Because he, who has this humility and devotion, has that kind of virtue already. The Scripture every where speaks of uprightness and sincerity of heart, as that virtue that is saving. He that sincerely asks for grace to obey, has that sincerity and uprightness of heart that is exercised in sincere obedience; for he that sincerely asks this, is sincerely willing to obey, or sincerely desirous of obeying. Or, 2. If the Doctor, by that obedience that is indispensably required in order to salvation, means perseverance in sincere virtue, and this be promised to devoutly and sincerely asking it; then hereby must be meant, either devoutly and sincerely asking it once, or final perseverance in this sincere asking, or a certain limited continuance in that asking. If a final perseverance in asking be the condition of grace to lead us to persevere, saving virtue is, as said before, the condition of itself. For persevering sincerity is the condition of obtaining persevering sincerity. If it be only once asking, or asking a limited number of times, or a limited continuance in asking, this is contrary to the Arminian doctrine about perseverance. For it supposes a person in this life, on a past condition, to be already, before the end of the day of his probation, so confirmed in obedience that it is impossible for him to fall away.

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§ 26. One danger of these Arminian notions is, that they strongly tend to prevent conviction of sin.

§ 27. The vast pretences of Arminians to an accurate and clear view of the scope and design of the sacred penmen, and a critical knowledge of the original, will prove forever vain and insufficient to help them against such clear evidence as the scripture exhibits concerning efficacious grace. I desire it may be shewn, if it can be, that ever any terms, that are fuller and stronger, are used more frequently, or in greater variety, to signify God's being the author, efficient and bestower of any kind of benefit, than as to the bestowment of true virtue or goodness of heart; whether concerning the deliverance out of Egypt, or the manna that was rained down from heaven, or the bestowment of the blessings of Canaan, or saving Noah and his family in the ark; or the raising any from the dead, or Christ's giving health to the sick, or sight to the blind, or bread to the hungry in the wilderness, or any thing else whatsoever; or the giving being to mankind in their creation; the giving reason to them, with their other natural faculties; the giving them life and breath; the giving them the beautiful form of their bodies; the giving them life at the general resurrection; the giving them their glory and happiness in heaven; the giving prophets, and the word of God by the prophets and others; the giving the means of grace and salvation; the giving Christ, and providing means of salvation in him. Yea, I know of no one thing in scripture wherein such significant, strong expressions are used, in so great variety, or one half so often, as the bestowment of this benefit of true goodness and piety of heart. But after all, we must be faced down in it with vast confidence, that the scriptures do not imply any more than only exhibiting means of instruction, leaving the determining and proper causing of the effect wholly with man, as the only proper, efficient and determining cause; and that the current of scripture is all against us; and that it is because we do not understand language, and are bigots and fools for imagining any such thing as that the scriptures say any thing of that nature, and be-

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cause the divines on our side do not understand Greek, and do not lay the scripture before them, nor mind the scope of scripture, nor consider the connexion, &c. &c. Perhaps it will be said, that every one of those scriptures, which are brought to prove efficacious grace, may have another interpretation, found out by careful and critical examination. But, alas! Is that the way of the Most High's instructing mankind, to use such a multitude of expressions, in different languages, and various different ages, all which, in their natural and most common acceptation, in all languages, nations and ages, must undoubtedly be understood in a particular sense; yea, the whole thread and current of all that God says, according to the use of speech among mankind, tends to lead to such an understanding, and so unavoidably leads his people in all ages into such an understanding; but yet, that he means no such thing, intending only that the true meaning should not be found out, but by the means of acute criticism, which might possibly hit upon the strange, unusual, and surprising meaning.

§. 28. Instead of persons being the determining and efficient causes of their own virtue and piety, after all the moral means God uses with man, let us suppose some third person between God and the subject of this gift of virtue, to be in the very same manner the sovereignly determining cause and efficient of virtue; that he had power to bestow it on us, or cause us to be the subjects of it, just in the same manner as the Arminians suppose we ourselves have power to be the causes of our being the subjects of virtue; and that it depended on this third person's free will, just in the same manner as now they suppose our having virtue depends on our own free will; and that God used moral means with that third person to bestow virtue on us, just in the same manner that he uses moral means to persuade us to cause virtue in ourselves, and the moral means had the like tendency to operate on his will as on ours; but finally, it was left entirely to his free will to be the sole determining cause whether we should have virtue, without any such influence on his will as

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in the least to ensure his sovereignty, and arbitrary disposal, and perfectly free selfdetermination; and it should be left contingent, whether he would bestow it or not; and, in these circumstances, this third person should happen to determine in our favor, and bestow virtue: Now I ask, would it be proper to ascribe the matter so wholly to God, in such strong terms, and in such a great variety; to ascribe it so entirely to him as his gift; to pray to him beforehand for it; to give him thanks, to give him all the glory, &c.? On the contrary, would not this determining cause, whose arbitrary, selfdetermined, selfpossessed, sovereign will, decides the matter, be properly looked upon as the main cause, vastly the most proper cause, the truest author and bestower of the benefit? Would not he be, as it were, all in the cause? Would not the glory properly belong to him, on whose pleasure the determination of the matter properly depended?

§ 29. By regeneration, being new creatures, raised from death in sin, in the New Testament, is not meant merely persons' being brought into the state and privileges of professing Christians, according to Dr. Taylor. When Christ says unto Nicodemus, John iii. 3. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" he does not mean merely, that unless a man be brought to a participation of the new state and privileges of the Christian church, he cannot enter on the possession and privileges of the Christian church; for that would be nonsense, and only to say, unless a man be born again, he cannot be born again; or, unless a man enter into the new state of things, as erected by the Messiah, he cannot enter on the new state of things as erected by the Messiah. Nor can he mean, that unless a man be a professing Christian, he cannot see the future and eternal privileges of the kingdom of heaven, for he supposes many heathens will see the kingdom of God in that sense.

And how unreasonable would it be to suppose that Christ would teach this doctrine of the necessity of being instated in

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his new modelled church, as such a great, important and main doctrine of his!

Taylor, to make out his scheme, is forced to suppose, that by being born of God is meant two things in the New Testament, (see p. 127, of his *Key*, and on *Original Sin*, p. 144, &c.) So he is forced to suppose, that by the kingdom of God is meant two things, (p. 125, marginal note, and other places) and so he supposes two senses of our being of the truth, our *being of, or in God*, and *knowing God*, (see p. 127, marginal note.) He is forced to suppose that many of the expressions, signifying antecedent blessings, are to be taken in a double sense, (see p. 138, No. 243, &c.) See how evidently being born of God signifies something else than a being brought into the state of professing Christians, 1 John ii. 29. "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doth righteousness is born of him." Chap. iii. "Whatsoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Chap. iv. 8. "Every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God." Chap. v. 4. "Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world." Verse 18. "We know that whosoever is born of God, sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God, keepeth himself; and that wicked one toucheth him not."

So it is exceeding apparent, that knowing God, and being of God, and in God, having this hope in him, &c. mean something beside our Christian profession, and principles, and privileges. 1 John ii. 3, &c. "Hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. Hereby know we that we are in him." Chap. iii. "Every one that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Chap. iii. 14. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Chap. iv. 12. "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us." Taylor supposes that this same apostle, by being born of God, means being received to the privileges of professing Christians.

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John v. 12. (p. 49.) 1 John v. 1, & v. 18. (p. 48.) 1 John iii. 1. (p. 49.)

§ 30. Why does the apostle say, concerning apostates, "they were not of us: If they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us;" if it be, as Dr. Taylor supposes, that professing Christians are indeed of the society of Christians to all intents and purposes, have all their privileges, are truly the children of God, members of Christ, of the household of God, saints, believers that have obtained like precious faith, are all one body, have one spirit, one faith, one inheritance, have their hearts purified and sanctified, are all the children of light, are all of the household of God, fellow citizens with the saints, have all fellowship with Christ, &c.?

§ 31. It is true, the nation of the Jews are in the Old Testament said to be elected, called, created, made, formed, redeemed, delivered, saved, bought, purchased, begotten. But particular Jews are no where so spoken of, at least with reference to the same thing, viz. their national redemption, when they were brought out of Egypt, &c.

David, in the book of Psalms, though he is so abundant there in giving thanks to God for his mercies, and is also so frequent in praising God for God's redeeming his people out of Egypt, and the salvation God wrought for the nation and church of Israel at that time; yet he never once blesses God (having respect to that salvation) that God had chosen him and redeemed him, bought him, regenerated him; never (having reference to that affair) speaks in the language of the apostle, "He loved me, and gave himself for me;" though he often speaks of the blessedness of those men God had chose, and caused to come nigh unto him, agreeably to the language of the New Testament, and often blesses God for redeeming and saving him in particular; but never, in any of these things, has he respect to those national privileges, nor indeed any other of the penmen of the Psalms; which is

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very strange, if the privilege of being bought, made, created, &c. as applied to the nation of the Jews, be that which the apostle in the New Testament applies to himself in particular, and which this and the other apostles applied to many other particular persons.

§ 32. That professing Christians are said to be sanctified, washed, &c. does not argue, that all professing Christians are so in fact. For Taylor himself says, "it should be carefully observed, that it is very common in the sacred writings, to express not only our Christian privileges, but also the duty to which they oblige, in the present or preterperfect tense; or to speak of that as done, which only ought to be done, and which, in fact, may possibly never be done: As in Matth. v. 13. "Ye are the salt of the earth," that is, ye ought to be. Rom. ii. 4. "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance;" that is, ought to lead thee: Chap. vi. 2. Chap. viii. 9. Col. iii. 3. 1 Pet. i. 6. "Wherein ye greatly rejoice;" i. e. ought to rejoice. 2 Cor. iii. 18. "We all with open face (enjoying the means of) beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are (ought to be, enjoy the means of being) changed into the same image from glory to glory." 1 Cor. v. "Ye are unleavened," i. e. obliged by the Christian profession to be. Heb. xiii. 14. "We seek, (i. e. we ought to seek, or, according to our profession, we seek) a city to come." 1 John ii. 12....15. iii. 9. v. 4....18, and in other places. See *Taylor's Key*, p. 139. No. 244, and p. 144. No. 246. This overthrows all his supposed proofs, that those which he calls antecedent blessings, do really belong to all professing Christians.

§ 33. The case was quite otherwise in the Christian church with regard to election, redemption, creation, &c. from what it was with the Jews. With the Jews, election, their redemption out of Egypt, their creation, was a national thing; it began with them as a nation, and descended, as it were, from the nation, to particular persons. Particular persons were first of the nation and church of the Jews; so, by that means,

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had an interest in their election, redemption, &c. that God wrought of old. The being of the nation and church of Israel, was the ground of a participation in these privileges.* But it is evident, it is contrariwise in Christians. With regard to them, the election, redemption, creation, regeneration, &c. are personal things. They begin with particular persons, and ascend to public societies. Men are first redeemed, bought, created, regenerated, and by that means become members of the Christian church; and this is the ground of their membership. Paul's regeneration, and Christ's loving him, and giving himself for him, was the foundation of his being of the Christian church, that holy nation, peculiar people, &c. whereas, David's being one of the nation of Israel, is the proper ground of his participation in Israel's redemption out of Egypt, and of that birth and formation of the people that were at that time. It is apparent the case was thus. It cannot be otherwise. It is evident that the new creation, regeneration, calling, and justification, are personal things, because they are by personal influences; influences of God's spirit on particular persons, and personal qualifications.

Their regeneration was a personal thing, and therefore, it is not called simply an entering into the new creation, or obtaining a part in the new world or new Jerusalem, &c. but a putting off the *old man*, and putting on the *new man*. They are first raised from the dead, and by that means come to belong to the church of Christ. They are first lively or living stones, and by that means come to belong to the spiritual house, and the holy temple; by being lively stones, they come to be parts of the living temple, and capable of it. So that their being alive, is prior to their belonging to the Christian church. The Christian calling, is represented as being the ground of their belonging to the church. They are called into the church, called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ.

* It is much to be doubted whether our author is correct in the material distinction he here makes between the Jewish and Christian dispensations. The reader will consider whether privileges and blessings were not personal as much under the one as the other.

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Their spiritual baptism or washing, is prior to their being in the church. They are by one spirit baptised into one body. They put on Christ, and so become interested in Christ, and sharers with those that had a part in him. By such a personal work of the Spirit of God, they were first made meet to be partakers with the saints in light, before they were partakers.

§ 34. It will follow from Taylor's scheme, that Simon the sorcerer had an interest in all the antecedent blessings. Yet the apostle tells him he was at that time in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity. If he was really justified, washed, cleansed, sanctified; how was he at that time in the bond of iniquity? Justification, forgiveness, &c. is a release from the bond of iniquity. If the heart be purified by faith, it does not remain in the gall of bitterness.

§ 35. Saving grace differs from common grace, in nature and kind. To suppose only a gradual difference, would not only be to suppose, that some in a state of damnation are, within an infinitely little as good as some in a state of salvation, (which greatly disagrees with the Arminian notion of men's being saved by their own virtue and goodness) but this, taken with the Arminian notion of men's falling from grace, will naturally lead us to determine, that many that are once in a state of salvation, may be in such a state, and out of it, scores of times in a very short space. For though a person is in a state of salvation, he may be but just in it, and may be infinitely near the limits between a state of salvation and damnation; and as the habits of grace are, acccording to that scheme, only contracted and raised by consideration and exercise, and the exertion of the strength of the mind, and are lost when a man falls from grace by the intermission or cessation of these, and by contrary acts and exercises; and as the habits and principles of virtue are raised and sunk, brought into being and abolished by those things, and both the degree of them and the being of them wholly depend on them; the consequence will naturally be, that when a man is first raised to that degree of a virtuous disposition, as to be in a state of

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salvation, and the degree of virtue is almost infinitely near the dividing line, it will naturally be liable to be a little raised or sunk every hour, according as the thoughts and exercises of the mind are; as the mercury in the thermometer or barometer is never perfectly at rest, but is always rising or subsiding, according to the weight of the atmosphere, or the degree of heat.

§ 36. The dispute about grace's being resistible or irresistible, is perfect nonsense. For the effect of grace is upon the will; so that it is nonsense, except it be proper to say that a man with his will can resist his own will, or except it be possible for him to desire to resist his own will; that is, except it be possible for a man to will a thing and not will it at the same time, and so far as he does will it. Or if you speak of enlightening grace, and say this grace is upon the understanding; it is nothing but the same nonsense in other words. For then the sense runs thus, that a man, after he has seen so plainly that a thing is best for him that he wills it, yet he can at the same time nill it. If you say he can will any thing he pleases, this is most certainly true; for who can deny, that a man can will any thing he doth already will? That a man can will any thing that he pleases, is just as certain, as what is, is. Wherefore it is nonsense to say, that after a man has seen so plainly a thing to be so much best for him that he wills it, he could have not willed it if he had pleased; that is to say, if he had not willed it, he could have not willed it. It is certain, that a man never doth any thing but what he can do. But to say, after a man has willed a thing, that he could have not willed it if he had pleased, is to suppose two wills in a man; the one to will which goes first; the other to please or choose to will. And so with the same reason we may say, there is another will to please; to please to will; and so on to a thousand. Wherefore, to say that the man could have willed otherwise if he had pleased, is just all one as to say, that if he had willed otherwise, then we might be sure he could will otherwise.

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§ 37. Those that deny infusion of grace by the Holy Spirit, must, of necessity, deny the Spirit to do any thing at all. By the Spirit's infusing, let be meant what it will, these who say there is no infusion, contradict themselves. For they say the Spirit doth something in the soul; that is, he causeth some motion, or affection, or apprehension to arise in the soul, that, at the same time, would not be there without him. Now, God's Spirit doeth what he doeth; he doth as much as he doth; or he causeth in the soul as much as he causeth, let that be how little soever. So much as is purely the effect of his immediate motion, that is the effect of his immediate motion, let that be what it will; and so much is infused, how little soever that be. This is selfevident. For suppose the Spirit of God only to assist the natural powers, then there is something done betwixt them. Men's own powers do something, and God's Spirit doth something; only they work together. Now, that part that the Spirit doth, how little soever it be, is infused. So that they that deny infused habits, own that part of the habit is infused. For they say, the Holy Spirit assists the man in acquiring the habit; so that it is acquired rather sooner than it would be otherwise. So that part of the habit is owing to the Spirit; some of the strength of the habit was infused, and another part is owing to the natural powers of the man. Or if you say not so, but that it is all owing to the natural power assisted; how do you mean assisted? To act more lively and vigorously than otherwise? Then that liveliness and vigorousness must be infused; which is a habit, and therefore an infused habit. It is grace, and therefore infused grace. Grace consists very much in a principle that causes vigorousness and activity in action. This is infusion, even in the sense of the opposite party. So that, if any operation of the Holy Spirit at all is allowed, the dispute is only, How much is infused? The one says, a great deal, the other says, but little.

§ 38. 1st. The main thing meant by the word efficacious, is this, it being decisive. This seems to be the main question. 2d. Its being immediate and arbitrary in that sense, as not to

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be limited to the laws of nature. 3d. That the principles of grace are supernatural in that sense, that they are entirely different from all that is in the heart before conversion. 4th. That they are infused, and not *contracted* by custom and exercise. 5th. That the change is instantaneous, and not gradual. These four last heads may be subdivisions of a second general head: So that the divisions may be thus: 1st. The main thing meant, is, that it is decisive; 2d, That it is immediate and supernatural. The four last of the heads mentioned above, may be subdivisions of this last.

So that there are two things relating to the doctrine of efficacious grace, wherein lies the main difference between the Calvinists and Arminians as to this doctrine. *First*, That the grace of God is determining and decisive as to the conversion of a sinner, or a man's becoming a good man, and having those virtuous qualifications that entitle to an interest in Christ and his salvation. *Secondly*, That the power and grace and operation of the Holy Spirit, in, or towards, the conversion of a sinner, is immediate: That the habit of true virtue or holiness is immediately implanted or infused; that the operation goes so far, that a man has habitual holiness given him instantly, wholly by the operation of the Spirit of God, and not gradually by assistance concurring with our endeavors, so as gradually to advance virtue into a prevailing habit. And beside these, *Thirdly*, It is held by many, of late, that there is no immediate interposition of God; but that all is done by general laws.

The former is that which is of greatest importance or consequence in the controversy with Arminians, (though the others are also very important) and this, only, is what I shall consider in this place; perhaps the others may be considered, God willing, in some other discourse.

§ 39. Concerning what the Arminians say, that these are speculative points; all devotion greatly depends on a sense and acknowledgment of our dependence on God. But this is one of the very chief things belonging to our dependence on God: How much stress do the Scriptures lay on our de-

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pendence on God! All assistance of the Spirit of God whatsoever, that is by any present influence or effect of the Spirit; any thing at all that a person that is converted from sin to God, is the subject of, through any immediate influence of the Spirit of God upon him, or any thing done by the Spirit, since the completing and confirming the Canon of the Scriptures, must be done by a physical operation, either on the soul or body.

The Holy Spirit of God does something to promote virtue in men's hearts, and to make them good, beyond what the angels can do. But the angels can present motives; can excite ideas of the words of promises and threatenings, &c. and can persuade in this way by moral means; as is evident, because the devils in this way promote vice.

§ 40. There is no objection made to God's producing any effects, or causing any events, by any immediate interposition, producing effects arbitrarily, or by the immediate efforts of his will, but what lies equally against his ordering it so, that any effects should be produced by the immediate interposition of men's will, to produce effects otherwise than the established laws of nature would have produced without men's arbitrary interposition.

I beg the reader's attention to the following quotations.... "That otherwise, the world cannot be the object of inquiry and science, and far less of imitation by arts: Since imitation necessarily presupposes a certain, determinate object, or fixed, ascertainable relations and connexions of things; and that, upon the contrary supposition, the world must be absolutely unintelligible. Nature, in order to be understood by us, must always speak the same language to us. It must therefore stedfastly observe the same general laws in its operations, or work uniformly, and according to stated, invariable methods and rules. Those terms, order, beauty, general good, &c. plainly include, in their meaning, analogy; and constancy, uniformity amidst variety; or, in other words, the regular observance of general, settled laws, in the make and economy, production, and operations or effects, of any object to

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which they are ascribed. Wherever order, fixed connexions, or general laws and unity of design take place, there is certainty in the nature of such objects, and so knowledge may be acquired. But where these do not obtain, there can be nothing but unconnected, independent parts. All must be disorder and confusion; and consequently, such a loose, disjointed heap of things, must be an inexplicable chaos. In one word, science, prudence, government, imitation and art, necessarily suppose the prevalence of general laws throughout all the objects in nature to which they reach. No being can know itself, project or pursue any scheme, or lay down any maxims for its conduct, but so far as its own constitution is certain, and the connexion of things relative to it are fixed and constant. For so far only are things ascertainable; and therefore, so far only can rules be drawn from them." *Turnbull's Mor. Phil.* Part I. *Introd.*

"The exercise of all moral powers, dispositions and affections of mind, as necessarily presuppose an established order of nature, or general laws settled by the author of nature with respect to them, as the exercise of our bodily senses about qualities and effects of corporeal beings do with regard to them. We could neither acquire knowledge of any kind, contract habits, or attain to any moral perfection whatsoever, unless the author of our nature had appointed and fixed certain laws relating to our moral powers, and their exercises and acquisitions." *Ibid.* p. 13, 14. Yet this Turnbull strenuously holds a selfdetermining power in the will of man. Such like arguments, if they are valid against any interposition at all, will prevail against all interposition of God or man, and against the interposition of God ever to bring the world to an end, or amend it; and prove that all shall be according to general laws. And they might as well argue, that the making of the world too was by general laws. If it be said, that it is of great importance and absolute necessity, that God should at last interpose and rectify the course of nature....I answer, this is yielding the point, that, in cases of great importance, it is reasonable to suppose there may be an interposition that may be arbitrary, and not by general laws. . . .

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§ 41. It is not necessary that men should be able, by the connexions of things, to know all future events; nor was this ever in the Creator's designs. If it had been so, he could have enabled them to know the future volitions of men, and those events that depend upon them, which are by far the most important.

§ 42. The nature of virtue being a positive thing, can proceed from nothing but God's immediate influence, and must take its rise from creation or infusion by God. For it must be either from that, or from our own choice and production, either at once or gradually, by diligent culture. But it cannot begin, or take its rise from the latter, viz. our choice, or voluntary diligence. For if there exist nothing at all of the nature of virtue before, it cannot come from cultivation; for by the supposition there is nothing of the nature of virtue to cultivate, it cannot be by repeated and multiplied acts of virtuous choice, till it becomes an habit. For there can be no one virtuous choice, unless God immediately gives it. The first virtuous choice, or a disposition to it, must be immediately given, or it must proceed from a preceding choice. If the first virtuous act of will or choice be from a preceding act of will or choice, that preceding act of choice must be a virtuous act of choice, which is contrary to the supposition. For then there would be a preceding act of choice before the first virtuous act of choice. And if it be said the first virtuous act of choice is from a preceding act of will which is not virtuous, this is absurd. For an act of will not virtuous, cannot produce another act of will of a nature entirely above itself, having something positive in it which the cause has nothing of, and more excellent than it is; any more than motion can produce thought or understanding; or the collision of two bodies can produce thought; or stones and lead can produce a spirit; or nothing can produce something.

§ 43. As to man's inability to convert himself....In them that are totally corrupt, there can be no tendency towards

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their making their hearts better, till they begin to repent of the badness of their hearts. For if they do not repent, they still approve of it; and that tends to maintain their badness, and confirm it. But they cannot begin sincerely to repent of the badness of their hearts, till their hearts begin to be better, for repentance consists in a change of the mind and heart. So that it is not men's repentance that first gives rise to their having a better heart; and therefore it cannot be any tendency in them to make their hearts better, that gives rise to it. The heart can have no tendency to make itself better, till it begins to have a better tendency; for therein consists its badness, viz. its having no good tendency or inclination. And to begin to have a good tendency, or, which is the same thing, a tendency and inclination to be better, is the same thing as to begin already to be better. And therefore the heart's inclination to be good, cannot be the thing that first gives rise to its being made good. For its inclination to be better, is the same thing with its becoming better.

§ 44. If there be any immediate influence or action of the Spirit of God at all on any created beings, in any part of the universe, since the days of the apostles, it is physical. If it be in exciting ideas of motives, or in any respect assisting or promoting any effect, still it is physical; and every whit as much so, as if we suppose the temper and nature of the heart is immediately changed. And it is as near akin to a miracle. If the latter be miraculous, so is the former.

§ 45. Whoever supposed that the term *irresistible* was properly used with respect to that power by which an infant is brought into being; meaning, irresistible by the infant? Or whoever speaks of a man's waking out of a sound sleep *irresistibly*, meaning, that he cannot resist awaking? Or who says, that Adam was formed out of the dust of the earth irresistibly? See what I have said of the use of such terms as *irresistible*, *unfrustrable*, &c. in my Inquiry about Liberty.

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§ 46. The opponents of efficacious grace and physical operation, may be challenged to show that it is possible that any creature should become righteous without a physical operation, either a being created with the habit of righteousness, or its being immediately infused. See what I have written in my book of *Original Sin*, in those sections wherein I vindicate the doctrine of original righteousness, and argue, that if Adam was not created righteous, no way can be invented how he could ever become righteous.

§ 47. As to that, Matthew vii. 7, "Seek and ye shall find;" it is explained by such places as that, Deut. iv. 29. "But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul." And by Deut. xxx. 2...6. "If thou shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice with all thy heart and with all thy soul; the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul;" which is very parallel with that, "to him that hath shall be given."

§ 48. The Scripture teacheth that holiness, both in principle and fruit, is from God. "It is God who worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." And Prov. xvi. 1. "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." Comparing this with other parts of the book of Proverbs, evinces that it is a moral preparation, and the answer of the tongue in moral regards, that is meant.

§ 49. Reason shows that the first existence of a principle of virtue cannot be from man himself, nor in any created being whatsoever; but must be immediately given from God; or that otherwise it never can be obtained, whatever this principle be, whether love to God, or love to men. It must either be from God, or be an habit contracted by repeated acts. But it is most absurd to suppose that the first existence of the principle of holy action, should be preceded by a course

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of holy actions. Because there can be no holy action without a principle of holy inclination. There can be no act done from love, that shall be the cause of first introducing the very existence of love.

§ 50. God is said to give true virtue and piety of heart to man; to work it in him, to create it, to form it, and with regard to it we are said to be his workmanship. Yea, that there may be no room to understand it in some improper sense, it is often declared as the peculiar character of God, that he assumes it as his character to be the author and giver of true virtue, in his being called the Sanctifier; he that sanctifieth us. "I am he that sanctifieth you." This is spoken of as the great prerogative of God, Levit. xx. 8, and other parallel places. He declares expressly that this effect shall be connected with his act, or with what he shall do in order to it. "I will sprinkle clean water, and you shall be clean." What God does is often spoken of as thoroughly effectual; the effect is infallibly consequent. "Turn us, and we shall be turned." Jesus Christ has the great character of a Saviour on this account, that "he saves his people from their sins." See Rom. xi. 26, 27. "And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, there shall come out of Zion a deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." God says, "I will put my law into their hearts; I will write my law in their inward parts, and they shall not depart away from me; I will take away the heart of stone, and give them an heart of flesh; I will give them an heart to know me; I will circumcise their hearts to love me; oh, that there were such an heart in them!" And it is spoken of as his work, to give, to cause, to create such a heart, to put it in them. God is said to incline their hearts, not only to give statutes, but to incline their hearts to his statutes.

Moses speaks of the great moral means that God had used with the children of Israel to enlighten them, and convince and persuade them; but of their being yet unpersuaded and unconverted, and gives this as a reason, that God

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had not given them an heart to perceive, as Deut. xxix. 4. "Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day." The scripture plainly makes a distinction between exhibiting light, or means of instruction and persuasion, and giving eyes to see, circumcising the heart, &c.

§ 51. Why should Christ teach us to pray in the Lord's prayer, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," if it is not God's work to bring that effect to pass, and it is left to man's free will, and cannot be otherwise, because otherwise it is no virtue, and none of their obedience, or doing of God's will; and God does what he can oftentimes consistently with man's liberty, and those that enjoy the means he uses, do generally neglect and refuse to do his will? He does so much, that he can well say, what could I have done more? And yet almost all are at the greatest distance from doing his will. See Colos. i. 9, 10.

§ 52. If it be as the Arminians suppose, that all men's virtue is of the determination of their own free will, independent on any prior determining, deciding, and disposing of the event; that it is no part of the ordering of God, whether there be many virtuous or few in the world, whether there shall be much virtue or little, or where it shall be, in what nation, country, or when, or in what generation or age; or whether there shall be any at all: Then none of these things belong to God's disposal, and therefore, surely it does not belong to him to promise them. For it does not belong to him to promise in an affair, concerning which he has not the disposal.

And how can God promise, as he oftentimes does in his word, glorious times, when righteousness shall generally prevail, and his will shall generally be done; and yet that it is not an effect which belongs to him to determine; it is not left to his determination, but to the sovereign, arbitrary determination of others, independently on any determination of him; and therefore surely they ought to be the prom-

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isers? For him to promise, who has it not in his hands to dispose and determine, is a great absurdity; and yet God oftentimes in promising, speaks of himself as the sovereign disposer of the matter, using such expressions as abundantly imply it. Isaiah lx. 22. "I the Lord do hasten it in its time." Surely this is the language of a promiser, and not merely a predictor. God promises Abraham, that "all the families of the earth shall be blessed in him." God swears, "every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess." And it is said to be given to Christ, that every nation, &c. should serve and obey him, Dan. vii. After what manner they shall serve and obey him, is abundantly declared in other prophecies, as in Isaiah xi. and innumerable others. These are spoken of in the next chapter, as the excellent things that God does.

§ 53. If God is not the disposing author of virtue, then he is not the giver of it. The very notion of a giver implies a disposing cause of the possession of the benefit. 1 John iv. 4. "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them, (i. e. have overcome your spiritual enemies) because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world;" that is, plainly, he is stronger, and his strength overcomes. But how can this be a reason, if God does not put forth any overcoming, effectual strength in the case, but leaves it to free will to get the victory, to determine the point in the conflict?

§ 54. There are no sort of benefits that are so much the subject of the promises of scripture, as this sort, the bestowment of virtue, or benefits which imply it. How often is the faith of the Gentiles, or their coming into the Christian Church promised to Christ in the Old Testament, Isaiah xlix. 6, and many other places; and he has promised it to his church, chap. xlix. 18...21, and innumerable other places. See Rom. xv. 12, 13. What a promise have we, Isaiah lx. 21. "Thy people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hand, that I may be glorified;"...compared with the next

chapter, 3d verse, "That they may be called the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." See also verse 8th of the same chapter. Likewise chap. lx. 17, 18. "I will make thy officers peace, and thy exactors righteousness; violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy border, but thou shalt call thy walls salvation, and thy gates praise." Here it is promised that the rulers shall be righteous; and then, in the 21st verse following, it is promised that the people shall be so. The change of men to be of a peaceable disposition is promised, as in places innumerable, so in Isaiah xi. 6....11. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid," &c. Isaiah lv. 5. "Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, for he hath glorified thee." Jer. iii. 15. "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." This implies a promise that there should be such pastors in being, and that they should be faithful to feed the people with knowledge and understanding. Jer. x. 23. "The way of man is not in himself." Stebbing owns, that on Arminian principles, conversion depending on the determination of free will, it is possible, in its own nature, that none should ever be converted, (p. 235.) Then all the promises of virtue, of the revival of religion, &c. are nothing. Jer. xxxi. 18. "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned,"...compared with Jer. xvii. 14. "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for thou art my praise." Which shews the force and meaning of such a phraseology to be, that God alone can be the doer of it; and that if he undertakes it, it will be effectually done. Jer. xxxi. 32....35. "Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord:) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those

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days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." The prophet elsewhere tells what is connected with knowing God, viz. doing judgment and justice, and shewing mercy to the Chap. xxii. 16. Jer. xxxii. 39, 40. "And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me, for ever, for the good of them and their children after them; and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good. But I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me." Jer. xxxiii. 2. "Thus saith the Lord, the maker thereof, the Maker to fashion it, the Lord that formed it." Verse 8. "And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me." Ezek. xi. 18....20. "And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof, and all the abomination thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you, and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and I will give them an heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." Zech. xii. 10, to the end. "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced," &c.

So in the next chapter at the beginning, "I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall be no more remembered;" and also, "I will cause the prophets, and also the unclean spirits to pass out of the land." Mal. iii. 3, 4. "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah

and Jerusalem, be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in the former years."

3. We are told, Job xxviii. 28, that "the fear of the Lord is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding." The same is also abundantly declared in other places. But it is equally declared, that God is the author and giver of wisdom, and that he is the author wholly and only; which is denied of other things. It is also abundantly declared in this 28th chapter of Job, that it cannot be obtained of any creature by any means; and it is implied in the end of the chapter, that it is God that gives wisdom; as is asserted, Prov. ii. 6. "For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." It is the promise of God the Father, Psalm cx. 3. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Psalm cxix. 35. "Make me to go in the way of thy commandments." Verse 36. "Incline my heart unto thy testimonies."

4. We are directed earnestly to pray and cry unto God for wisdom, and the fear of the Lord, for this reason, that it is he that giveth wisdom. Prov. ii. at the beginning. Compare Jer. xxxii. with Prov. xxi. 1. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it withersoever he will." Here it is represented that the will of God determines the wills of men, and that when God pleases to interpose, he even directs them according to his pleasure, without failure in any instance. This shows that God has not left men's hearts so in their own hands, as to be determined by themselves alone, independently on any antecedent determination.

Prov. xxviii. 26. "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Man is to be commended for making a wise improvement of his outward possessions, for his own comfort; yet this is the gift of God. Eccles. ii. 24....26. "There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labor. This also I saw that it was from the hand of God."

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John i. 12, 13. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; which were born, not of the will of man, but of God." Thus also we read, Luke iii. 8. "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." John iii. 3. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Verse 5. "Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Verse 8. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Jam. i. 18. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures."

What Christ meant by being born again, we may learn by the abundant use of the like phrase by the same disciple that wrote this gospel, in his first epistle, who doubtless learned his language from his master; and particularly from those sayings of his concerning the new birth, which he took more special notice of, and which left the deepest impressions on his mind, which we may suppose are those he records, when he writes the history of his life. Matth. iv. 19. "I will make you fishers of men." So Mark i. 16, 20, together with Luke v. "From henceforth thou shalt catch men." Compared with the foregoing story of Christ's giving them so great a draught of fishes, which was wholly his doing, and ascribed to him. Matth. vi. 10. "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done." Matth. xi. 25.....27. "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." So Luke x. 21, 22. John vi. 37. "All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me." Verse 44. "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him."

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John x. 16. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." Verse 26.....29. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you; my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands. My Father which gave them me," &c.

Acts xv. 3, 4. "Declaring the conversion of the Gentiles, and they declared all things that God had done with them." Verse 9. "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." Therefore it is not probable, that the heart is first purified, to fit it for faith. John xiv. 12. "Greater works than these shall he do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." The meaning of it is confirmed from John xii. 23, 24, 28.....32, and John xvii. 1, 2, 3. Isa. xlix. 3, 5, and xxvi. 15, and Isa. xvi. 14. Isa. xvii. 3, 4, 5, and 16, 17, and 22, 24, (especially Isa. lv. 4, 5.) Jer. xxx. 19. Rom. ix. 16. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." By such an expression in the apostle's phraseology, from time to time, is meant the use of endeavors, whereby they seek the benefit they would obtain. So what he here says, is agreeable to what he says in chap. xi. 4, 5, 6, 7, where he particularly shews, that it is God that preserves the remnant, and that it is of the election of his grace and free kindness, and not of their works; but in such a way of freedom, as is utterly inconsistent with its being of their works. And in verse 7, that it is not determined by their seeking, but by God's election. The apostle here, as Dr. *Taylor* says, has respect to bodies of men, to the posterity of Esau and Jacob, &c. Yet this he applies to a distinction made in those days of the gospel, and that distinction made between those that were in the Christian church, and those that were not, and particularly some of the Jews that were in the Christian church, and others of the same nation that were not; which is made by some believing and accepting Christ, and others rejecting him; by that faith which they professed to exercise with all their hearts; that

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faith which was a mercy and virtue, and the want of which was a fault; as appears by the objection the apostle supposes, verse 19. "Why doth he yet find fault?" The want of which faith argued hardness of heart, verse 18, exposed them to wrath and destruction, as a punishment of sin, verse 22, and exposes persons to be like the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, verse 29.

Rom. xi. 4, 5, 6, 7. But what saith the answer of God unto him? "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so at this present time, there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." 2 Tim. ii. 9. Eph. ii. 9. Tit. iii. 5. "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Rom. xi. 17, 18. "If some of the branches are broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in amongst them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches."

Rom. xi. 25, 26, 27. "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved. As it is written, There shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." Together with verses 35, 36. "Who hath first given unto him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things, to whom be glory for ever and ever."

§ 57. That expression, Rom. i. 7, and 1 Cor. i. 2, and elsewhere, *called to be saints*, implies, that God makes the distinction. Compare this with what Christ says, John x. 27. "My sheep hear my voice." Verse 16. "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold; them also must I bring; and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." 1 Cor. i. 26, 27, 28, to the end; "For ye see your call-

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ing, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of, &c. That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus," &c. Rom. xi. latter end. Heb. xiii. 20, 21. 1 Cor. iii. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. "Who then is Paul, or who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. I have planted, and Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.... We are laborers together with God; ye are God's husbandry; ye are God's building." According to the Arminian scheme, it ought to have been; I have planted, and Apollos watered, and God hath planted and watered more especially. For we have done it only as his servants. But you yourselves have given the increase; the fruit has been left to your free will: Agreeably to what the Arminians from time to time insist on, in what they say upon the parable of the vineyard which God planted in a fruitful hill, &c. and looked that it should bring forth grapes, and says, what could I have done more unto my vineyard?

1 Cor. iii. 3. "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of the heart." They were the epistle of Christ, as the effect of the Spirit of God in their hearts held forth the light of truth; of gospel truth with its evidence to the world; as the church is compared to a candlestick, and called the pillar and ground of the truth. This is agreeable to those scriptures in the Old Testament, that speak of writing God's law in their hearts, &c. Add to this, Chap. iv. 6. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. v. 14....18. "If one died for all, then were all dead; that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new crea-

tore. Old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new; and all things are of God.

2 Cor. viii. 16, 17. Thanks be to God, who put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward of his own accord he went unto you." So the next chapter speaks of the Corinthians' forwardness and readiness in their bounty to the poor saints, not as of necessity, but with freedom and cheerfulness, according to the purpose of their own hearts or will; but yet speaks of their charity as just cause of much thanksgiving to God; and speaks expressly of thanksgiving to him for their subjection of them to the gospel, and liberal distribution to them.

Gal. i. 15, 16. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles, compared with 2 Cor. iv. 6, 7, and the account which he gives himself of his conversion, Acts xxvi. 16...18.

Gal. ii. 19, 20. I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.

Gal. v. 22, 23, &c. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

Eph. i. 19. The apostle, in Eph. i. 18...20, speaks of some exceeding great work of power, by which they that believe are distinguished. But a bodily resurrection is no such distinguishing work of power. See the words: "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ Jesus, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places." This apostle repeats the same thing in substance again in chapter iii. 14, and following verses, and tells us what sort of knowledge he desired,

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and so earnestly prayed that they might receive; and what is the *power* that he speaks of, "That they may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." And tells by what means God would dwell in their hearts, by faith, &c. verses 16, 17. And he tells us in verse 20, what is the power of God he speaks of. See Rom. xv. 13. 1 Pet. i. 5. and 2 Thess. i. 11, 12. See also what the apostle speaks of as an effect of God's glorious power, Col. i. 11.

Eph. i. 18—20. is to be taken in connexion with the words which follow in the beginning of the next chapter; which is a continuation of the same discourse, where the apostle abundantly explains himself. In those words there is an explanation of what had before been more figuratively represented. He here observes, that those that believe, are the subjects of a like exceeding greatness of power that Christ was, when he was raised from the dead, and set at God's own right hand in heavenly places. And then in the prosecution of this discourse he shows how, viz. in our being raised from the dead, being dead ourselves in trespasses and sins, and raised as Christ was, and made to sit together with him in heavenly places; and this he speaks of, not only as the fruit of the exceeding greatness of his power, but of the riches of his mercy, and exceeding riches of his grace; by grace in opposition to works; that it is by faith which is the gift of God. The apostle repeats it over and over, that it is by grace, and then explains how; not of works; and that our faith itself, by which it is, is not of ourselves, but is God's gift; and that we are wholly God's workmanship, and that all is owing to God's foreordaining that we should walk in good works. I know not what the apostle could have said more. See Eph. ii. 1—10.

In Eph. iii. it is spoken of as a glorious mystery of God's will, contrived of old, and determined from the foundation of the world, and his eternal purpose, &c. that God would

bring in the Gentiles as fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." Which confirms the promises of the Old Testament, that they were not foretold only as foreseen, but foredetermined, as what God would bring to pass. This is also spoken of elsewhere, as the fruit of God's eternal purpose, his election, &c. as our adversaries acknowledge.

§ 60. Sincerity itself is spoken of as coming from God. Phil. i. 10. "That ye may approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence in the day of Christ." And elsewhere God is represented as creating a clean heart, renewing a right spirit, giving an heart of flesh," &c. The apostle "gives thanks for the faith and love of the Colossians, their being delivered from the power of darkness, &c. and prays that they may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and might, agreeable to their knowledge, being fruitful in every good work; and for their perseverance, and that they might be made meet for the inheritance of the saints." Col. i. 3, 4, 9...13. This argues all to flow from God as the giver. Their first calling, and their love that their faith was attended with, and their knowledge and spiritual wisdom and prudence, and walking worthy of the Lord, and universal obedience, and doing every good work, and increasing in grace, and being strengthened in it, and their perseverance and cheerfulness in their obedience, and being made meet for their reward, all are from God. They are from God as the determining cause; else, why does the apostle pray that God would bestow or effect these things, if they be not at his determination whether they shall have them or not? He speaks of God's glorious power as manifested in the bestowment of these things.

Col. ii. 13. "And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him."

Col. iii. 10. "Have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."

See how many things the apostle gives thanks to God for in the Thessalonians, and prays for them. 2 Thess. i. 3, 4, 11, 12, and ii. 17, 18, and iii. 3, 4, 5. 1 Thess. i. verse 2, to the end, and chap. ii. verses 13, 14, and chap. iii. 9, 10, 12, 13, chap. v. 23, 24. 1 Thess. iii. 12. "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love," &c. 1 Thess. iv. 10. "But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I should write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. And indeed ye do it towards all the brethren." 1 Thess. v. 23, 24. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that hath called you, who also will do it."

2 Thess. i. 3, 4. "We are bound to thank God always for you, because your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; so that we glory in you, for your faith and patience in all your persecutions and tribulations."

The apostle thanks God for his own prayers, and for others. 2 Tim. i. 3. If they are from God, then doubtless also our prayers for ourselves, our very prayers for the Spirit, are from him.

The prophet ascribes persons' prayers to their having the spirit of grace and supplication. True acceptable prayer is spoken of, Rom. viii. as being the language of the Spirit; not that I suppose that the very words are indited, but the disposition is given. 2 Tim. i. 7. "God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind."

2 Tim. ii. 9. "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

Heb. xiii. 20, 21. "Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, and to do his

will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." See Eph. i. 19, 20, and 1 Cor. i. latter end. Heb. xii. 2. "Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith," compared with Philip. i. 5. James i. 5...8. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, that giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth, is like a wave of the sea, driven of the wind and tossed. For let not that man think he shall obtain any thing of the Lord. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." So that, in order to a man's having any reason to expect to be heard, he must first have faith, and a sincere, single heart. And what that is which the apostle calls wisdom, may be learnt from chap. iii. 17, 18. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." In chap. i. 5, &c. above cited, God is spoken of as the giver of this wisdom; and in the following part of the chapter, he is spoken of as the giver of this and every benefit of that kind; every thing that contains any thing of the nature of light or wisdom, or moral good; and this is represented as the fruit of his mere will and pleasure. Verses 16, 17, 18. "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." See John i. 13, and iii. 8.

The scope of the apostle, and connexion of his discourse, plainly shew that the apostle means to assert that all moral good is from God. In the preceding verses, he was warning those he wrote to, not to lay their sins, or pride, or lusts to the charge of God, and on that occasion he would have them be sensible that every good gift is from God, and no evil; that God is the Father of *light*, and only of light; and that no darkness is from him, because there is no darkness in him; no

change from light to darkness; no, not the least shadow. What he says is plainly parallel to what the Apostle John says, when he would signify God's perfect holiness without any sin; 1 John i, 5, 6. "This, then, is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." But if all moral good is from God, cometh down from him, and is his gift; then the very first good determination of the will, and every good improvement of assistance, is so.

1 Pet. i. 2... 5. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope," (or a living hope, i. e. from the dead, to be begotten from the dead, in the phrase of the New Testament, is the same as to be raised from the dead. See Colossians i. 18, Rev. i. 5) "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." See Eph. i. 18...20, and ii. at the beginning.

Philip. ii. 13. "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The plain meaning of this text is, that it is God by his operation and efficiency who gives the will, and also enables us to put that will in execution; or that he by his efficiency gives both the will and the deed. And this will remain the plain meaning of this text after this sort of gentlemen have worked upon it a thousand years longer, if any of them shall remain on earth so long. It will be the indisputable meaning of it, notwithstanding their criticisms on the word ἐνεργῶν, &c. I question whether any word can be found, in all the Greek language, more expressive and significant of an effectual operation. Wherever the words *effectual* and *effectually* are used in our translation of the Bible, this is the word used in the original. See the English Concordance.

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§ 61. By the disposing or determining cause of a benefit I mean, a cause that disposes, orders or determines, whether we shall be actually possessed of the benefit or not; and the same cause may be said to be an efficacious or effectual cause. That cause only can be said to be an efficacious cause, whose efficiency determines, reaches, and produces the effect.

A being may be the determiner and disposer of an event, and not properly an efficient or efficacious cause. Because, though he determines the futurity of the event, yet there is no positive efficiency or power of the cause that reaches and produces the effect; but merely a withholding or withdrawing of efficiency or power.

Concerning the giver's being a disposer or determiner, let us consider that objection, that when a man gives to a beggar, he does but offer, and leaves it with the determination of the beggar's will, whether he will be possessed of the thing offered. In answer to this I observe, that in the instance before us, the very thing given is the fruit of the bounty of the giver. The thing given is virtue, and this consists in the determination of the inclination and will. Therefore the determination of the will is the gift of God; otherwise virtue is not his gift, and it is an inconsistence to pray to God to give it to us. Why should we pray to God to give us such a determination of will, when that proceeds not from him but ourselves?

§ 62. Every thing in the Christian scheme argues, that man's title to, and fitness for heaven, depends on some great divine influence, at once causing a vast change, and not any such gradual change as is supposed to be brought to pass by men themselves in the exercise of their own power. The exceeding diversity of the states of men in another world, argues it.

§ 63. Arminians make a great ado about the phrase *irresistible grace*. But the grand point of controversy really is, what is it that determines, disposes, and decides the matter, whether there shall be saving virtue in the heart or not; and

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much more properly, whether the grace of God in the affair be determining grace, than whether it be irresistible.

Our case is indeed extremely unhappy, if we have such a book to be our grand and only rule, our light and directory, that is so exceeding perplexed, dark, paradoxical and hidden every where in the manner of expression, as the scriptures must be, to make them consistent with Arminian opinions, by whatever means this has come to pass, whether through the distance of ages, diversity of customs, or by any other cause. It is to be considered that this is given for the rule of all ages; and not only of the most learned, and accurate, and penetrating critics, and men of vast inquiry and skill in antiquity, but for all sorts of persons, of every age and nation, learned and unlearned. If this be true, how unequal and unfit is the provision that is made! How improper to answer the end designed! If men will take subterfuge in pretences of a vast alteration of phrase through diversity of ages and nations, what may not men hide themselves from under such a pretence! No words will hold and secure them. It is not in the nature of words to do it. At this rate, language in its nature has no sufficiency to communicate ideas.

§ 64. In efficacious grace we are not merely passive, nor yet does God do some, and we do the rest. But God does all, and we do all. God produces all, and we act all. For that is what he produces, viz. our own acts. God is the only proper author and fountain; we only are the proper actors. We are, in different respects, wholly passive, and wholly active.

In the scriptures the same things are represented as from God and from us. God is said to convert, and men are said to convert and turn. God makes a new heart, and we are commanded to make us a new heart. God circumcises the heart, and we are commanded to circumcise our own hearts; not merely because we must use the means in order to the effect, but the effect itself is our act and our duty. These things are agreeable to that text, "God worketh in you both to will and to do."

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§ 65. Christ says, that no other than those whom "the Father draws, will come to him;" and *Stebbing* supposes none but those whom the Father draws in this sense, viz. by first giving them a teachable spirit, &c. But this was false in fact in the Apostle Paul and others; at least he did not give it in answer to prayer, as their scheme supposes, and must suppose; else efficacious grace is established, and the liberty of the will, in their sense of it, is overthrown.

§ 66. When Christ says, John x. "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold;" it is unreasonable to suppose he meant all in the world, that were then of a teachable disposition. Many of them would be dead before the gospel could be spread among the Gentiles; and many of the Gentiles were doubtless brought in, that at that time were not of a teachable disposition. And unless God's decrees and efficacious grace made a difference, it is unreasonable to suppose any other, than that multitudes, in countries where the apostles never preached, were as teachable as in those countries where they did go, and so they never were brought in according to the words of Christ, "Those whom the Father hath given me, shall come unto me." Christ speaks of the Father's giving them as a thing past, John x. 29. "My Father which *gave* them me."

When Christ speaks of men's being drawn to him, he does not mean any preparation of disposition antecedent to their having the gospel, but a being converted to Christ by faith in the gospel, revealing Christ crucified, as appears by John xii. 32. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Acts xv. 9. "Purifying their hearts by faith." Therefore we are not to suppose God first purifies the heart with the most excellent virtues, to fit it for faith.

The apostle says, "without faith it is impossible to please God." Therefore it is not possible that persons should have, before faith, those virtues that are peculiarly amiable to God, as Stebbing supposes.

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§ 67. The Apostle James tells us, that if we do not pray in faith, we have no reason to expect to receive any thing, and particularly not to receive divine wisdom. And therefore it is unreasonable to suppose with Stebbing, that persons first pray, even before they have a spirit of meekness, and teachableness, and humility, faith or repentance, and that God has promised to answer these prayers. Christian virtues being every where spoken of as the special effect of grace, and often called by the name of grace, by reason of its being the peculiar fruit of grace, does not well consist with the Arminian notion of assistance, viz. that God is obliged to give us assistance sufficient for salvation from hell, because, forsooth, it is not just to damn us for the want of that which we have not sufficient means to escape; and then, after God has given these sufficient means, our improving them well is wholly from ourselves, our own will, and not from God; and the thing wherein Christian virtue consists, is wholly and entirely from ourselves.

§ 68. Efficacious grace is not inconsistent with freedom. This appears by 2 Cor. viii. 16, 17. "Thanks be to God which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you; for indeed he accepted the invitation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you." So that his forwardness being put into his heart by God, and his being forward of his own accord, are not inconsistent, one with the other.

§ 69. According to Arminian principles, men have a good and honest heart, the very thing that is the grand requisite in order to God's acceptance, and so the proper grand condition of salvation, and which is often spoken of in the scriptures as such, before they have the proper condition of salvation.

See Stebbing, page 48.....This good and honest, meek and humble, sincere heart, they suppose they have before they have faith, repentance or obedience. Yea, they themselves hold this previous qualification to be the grand and essential

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requisite in order to God's acceptance and salvation by Christ; so that they greatly insist that if men have it, they shall be surely saved, though they live and die in ignorance of the gospel, and without faith, and repentance, and holiness, which are necessary in order for salvation, according to them..... *Stebbing*, p. 13.

§ 70. I would ask, how it is possible for us to come by virtue at first, according to Arminian principles, or how we come by our first virtue? Is it natural? Is there some virtuous disposition with which we come into the world? But how is that virtue? That which men bring into the world is necessary, and what men had no opportunity to prevent, and it is not at all from our free will. How then can there be any virtue in it according to their principles? Or is our first virtue wholly from the influence of the Spirit of God without any endeavor or effort of ours, to be partly the cause of it? This, to be sure cannot be, by their principles; for, according to them, that which is not at all from us, or that we are not the causes of, is no virtue of ours. Is it wholly from our endeavors, without any assistance at all of the Spirit? This is contrary to what they pretend to hold; for they assert, that without divine assistance there can be no virtue. *Stebbing*, pages 27, 28, and pages 20, 21, and other places. If they say it is partly from the influence of the Spirit of God, and partly from our own endeavors, I would inquire whether those endeavors that our first virtue partly arises from, be good endeavors, and at all virtuous. If the answer be in the affirmative, this contradicts the supposition. For I am now inquiring what the first virtue is. The first virtue we have, certainly does not arise from virtuous endeavors preceding that first virtue; for that is to suppose virtue before the first virtue. If the answer be, that they are no good endeavors, they have nothing at all of the nature of the exercise of any good disposition, or any good aim and intention, or any virtuous sincerity; I ask, what tendency can such efforts of the mind, as are wholly empty of all goodness, have to produce true moral goodness in the heart?

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Can an action, that in principles and ends has no degree of moral good, have a tendency to beget a habit of acting from good principles and for good ends? For instance, can a man's doing something purely to satisfy some sensitive appetite of his own, or to increase his own worldly profit, have any kind of tendency to beget a habit of doing something from true, disinterested benevolence, or to excite to any act from such a principle? Certainly an act perfectly void of benevolence, has no more tendency to produce either an habit or act of benevolence, than nothing has a tendency to produce something.

§ 71. Stebbing supposes the assistance God gives, or the operation of the Spirit in order to faith, is to give a good and honest heart, prepared to receive and well improve the word; as particularly, meekness, humility, teachableness, &c. And supposes that these effects of the Spirit are to be obtained by prayer; but yet allows, that the prayer must be acceptably made, page 106, which supposes that some degree of virtue must be exercised in prayer. For surely they do not suppose any thing else, beside virtue in prayer, or in any other part of religion, is acceptable to God. I suppose they will not deny, that there must be at least some virtuous respect to the divine being, as well as some virtuous concern for the good of their own souls, to make any external act of religion in them at all acceptable to God, who is a spirit, and the searcher of hearts. And it may be also presumed that they will allow, that there are multitudes of men, who at present are so wicked, so destitute of virtue, that they have not virtue enough for acceptable prayer to God. They have not now so much respect to God or their own souls, as to incline them to pray at all. But they live in a total neglect of that duty. Now, I would inquire, how these men shall come by virtue, in order to acceptably praying to God? Or how is it within their reach by virtue of God's promises? Or how can they come by it, save by God's sovereign, arbitrary grace? Shall they pray to God for it, and so obtain it? But this is contrary to the supposition. For it is supposed, that they now have not virtue enough to pray acceptably, and this is the very thing inquired, how they come by the virtue necessary in order to their making acceptable

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prayer? Or shall they work the virtue in themselves wholly without God's assistance? But this is contrary to what they pretend, viz. that all virtue is from God, or by the grace and assistance of God, which they allow to be evident by that scripture, "*without me ye can do nothing.*" Or, is God obliged to give it, or to assist them to obtain it, without their praying for it, or having virtue enough to ask it of him? That they do not pretend. For they suppose the condition of our obtaining the heavenly Spirit is our seeking, &c. asking, &c. and besides, if God gives it without their first seeking it, that will make God the first determining efficient, yea, the mere and sole author of it, without their doing any thing toward it, without their so much as seeking or asking for it; which would be entirely to overthrow their whole scheme, and would, by their principles, make this virtue no virtue at all, because not at all owing to them, or any endeavors of theirs.

If they reply, they must in the first place *consider*: They are capable of consideration; and if they would consider as they ought and may, they would doubtless pray to God, and ask his help; and every man naturally has some virtue in him, which proper consideration would put into exercise so far as to cause him to pray in some measure acceptably, without any new gift from God....I answer, this is inconsistent with many of their principles. It is so, that men should naturally have some virtue in them. For what is natural is necessary; is not from themselves and their own endeavors and free acts; but prevents them all, and therefore cannot be their virtue. If they say, no; consideration will not stir up any virtue that is naturally in them, to cause them to pray virtuously; but God has obliged himself to give virtue enough to enable them to pray and seek acceptably, if they will consider: I answer, this is more than they pretend. They do not pretend that God has promised any new grace to any man, on any lower condition than asking, seeking, knowing, &c. and if they should think best at last to pretend any promise on lower terms, they had best produce the promises, and tell us what, and where they are. If they say, serious consideration itself is some degree of seeking their own good, and there is

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an implicit prayer in it to the Supreme Being to guide them into the way to their happiness: I answer, if it be supposed that there is an implicit prayer in their consideration, still they allow that prayer must be in some measure acceptable prayer, in order to its being entitled to an answer; and consequently must have some degree of virtuous respect to God, &c. and if so, then the same question returns with all the aforementioned difficulties over again, viz. How came the profane, thoughtless, vain, inconsiderate person by this new virtue, this new respect to God, that he ever exercises in this serious consideration and implicit prayer?

If they say, there is no necessity of supposing any implicit prayer in the first consideration; and yet, if the wicked, profane, careless person, makes a good improvement of what grace he has, in proper consideration or otherwise, God has obliged himself to give him more, in that general promise, "to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundance:" Then I answer, here is new virtue in his making a good improvement of what common assistance he has, which before he neglected, and made no good improvement of. How came he by this new virtue? Here, again, all the aforementioned difficulties return. Was it wholly from himself? This is contrary to what they pretend. Or is God obliged to give new assistance in order to this new virtue by any promise? If he be, what is the condition of the promise? It is absurd to say, making a good improvement of what assistance they have; for that is the thing we are inquiring after, viz. How comes he by that new virtue, making a good improvement of what he has, when before he had not virtue enough to make such an improvement?

Of whatever kind this assistance is, whether it be some afflictive dispensation of providence, or some other outward dispensation or inward influence, the difficulty is the same. How becomes God obliged to give this assistance; and what is the condition of the promise?

The answer must be, that this new virtue is without any new assistance given, and is from God no otherwise than as the former neglected assistance or grace subserves it. But

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the question is, whence comes the virtue of not neglecting, but improving that former assistance? Is it proper to say that a man is assisted to improve assistance by the assistance improved? Suppose a number of men were in the water in danger of drowning, and a friend on shore throws out a cord amongst them, but all of them for a while neglect it; at length one of them takes hold of it, and makes improvement of it; and any should inquire, how that man came by the prudence and virtue of improving the cord, when others did not, and he before had neglected it; would it be a proper answer to say, that he that threw out the rope, assisted him wisely to improve the rope, by throwing out the rope to him? This would be an absurd answer. The question is not, how he came by his opportunity, but how he came by the virtue and disposition of improvement. His friend on shore gave him the opportunity, and this is all. The man's virtue in improving it was not at all from him.

Would it not be exceedingly impertinent, in such a case, to set forth from time to time, how this man's discretion, and virtue, and prudence, was the gift of his friend on the shore, his mere gift, the fruit of his purpose and mere good pleasure, and of his power; and yet that it was of his own *will*?

Man's virtue, according to Arminian principles, must consist wholly and entirely in improving assistance: For in that only consists the exercise of their free will in the affair, and not in their having the assistance, although their virtue must be by their principles entirely from themselves, and God has no hand in it. From the latter part of the above discourse, it appears that, according to Arminian principles, men's virtue is altogether of themselves, and God has no hand at all in it.

§ 72. When I say that the acts and influences of the Spirit determine the effects, it is not meant that man has nothing to do to determine in the affair. The soul of man undoubtedly, in every instance, does voluntarily determine with respect to his own consequent actions. But this determination of the will of man, or voluntary determination of the soul of man, is the effect determined. This determining act of the soul is

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not denied, but supposed, as it is the effect we are speaking of, that the influence of God's Spirit determines.

§ 73. The scripture speaks of this as the reason that good men have virtue, *that God hath given it to them*; and the reason why bad men have it not, that *God hath not given it to them*. These two together clearly prove that God is the determining or disposing cause of virtue or goodness in men.

§ 74. Dr. Stebbing insists upon it, that conversion is the effect of God's word; and supposes that therefore it is demonstratively evident, that it must needs be the effect of men's free will, and not the necessary effect of the Spirit of God. But I say, that by their doctrine of selfdetermination, it cannot be the effect of the word of God in any proper sense at all. That it should be the effect of the word, is as inconsistent with their scheme, as they suppose it to be with ours. Selfdetermination is utterly inconsistent with conversion's being at all the effect of either the word or Spirit.

§ 75. They say that commands, threatenings, promises, invitations, counsels, &c. are to no purpose in our scheme. But indeed they can have no place in their scheme: For their scheme excludes all motive.

§ 76. In many particulars their scheme contradicts common sense. It is contrary to common sense, that a being should continually meet with millions of millions of real, proper disappointments and crosses to his proper desires, and not continually lead a distressed and unhappy life. It is contrary to common sense, that God should know that an event will certainly come to pass, whose nonexistence he at the same time knows is not impossible. It is contrary to common sense that a thing should be the cause of itself; and that a thing not necessary in its own nature should come to pass without any cause: That the more indifferent a man is in any moral action, the more virtuous he is &c.

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§ 77. If the grace of God is not disposing and determining, then a gracious man's differing in this respect from another, is not owing to the goodness of God. He owes no thanks to God for it; and so owes no thanks to God, that he is saved, and not others.

But how contrary is this to scripture! Seeing the scripture speaks of the gift of virtue, and of the possession of it, as a fruit of God's bounty.

§ 78. A man's conformity to the rule of duty, is partly owing to assistance or motive; if his conformity be to ten degrees, and it is in some measure, *v. g.* to the amount of five degrees, owing to sovereign assistance; then only the remaining five degrees are to be ascribed to the man himself, and therefore there are but five degrees of virtue.

§ 79. Dr. *Stebbing* says, "that a man is indeed both passive and active in his own conversion," and he represents God as partly the cause of man's conversion, and man himself as partly the cause, p. 208.

Again, *Stebbing* says, p. 254. "Faith and regeneration are our works, as well as his gifts, i. e. they arise partly from God and partly from ourselves." But if so, on this scheme, they imply virtue so far only as they are our works.

Men's salvation is attributed wholly and entirely to men in their scheme, and none of the praise of it is due to God, as will most evidently appear, if the matter be considered with a little attention. For, 1. They hold that man's salvation is given as a reward of man's virtue; so is pardon of sin, deliverance from hell, and eternal life and glory in heaven; all is for man's virtue. 2. Rewardable virtue wholly consists in the exercise of a man's own free will. They hold that a man's actions are no farther virtuous nor rewardable, than as they are from man himself. If they are partly from some foreign cause, so far they are not rewardable. It being so, that that virtue which is rewardable in man, is entirely from man himself; hence it is to himself wholly that he is to ascribe his obtaining the reward. If the virtue, which is that

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thing, and that thing only, which obtains the reward, be wholly from man himself, then it will surely follow, that his obtaining the reward is wholly from himself.

All their arguments suppose, that men's actions are no farther virtuous and rewardable, than as they are from themselves, the fruits of their own free will and selfdetermination. And men's own virtue, they say, is the only condition of salvation, and so must be the only thing by which salvation is obtained. And this being of themselves only, it surely follows, that their obtaining salvation is of themselves only.

They say, their scheme gives *almost all* the glory to God. That matter, I suppose, may easily be determined, and it may be made to appear beyond all contest, how much they do ascribe to the man, and how much they do not.

By them, salvation is so far from God, that it is God that gives opportunity to obtain salvation; it is God that gives the offer and makes the promise: But the obtaining of the thing promised is of men. The being of the promise is of God; but their interest in it is wholly of themselves, of their own free will. And furthermore, it is to be observed, that even God's making the offer, and giving the opportunity to obtain salvation, at least that which consists in salvation from eternal misery, is not of God, so as to be owing to any proper grace or goodness of his. For they suppose he was obliged to make the offer, and it would have been a reproach to his justice, if he had not given an opportunity to obtain salvation. For they hold, it is unjust for God to make men miserable for Adam's sin; and that it is unjust to punish them for that sin that they cannot avoid; and that, therefore, it is unjust for God not to preserve or save all men that do what they can, or use their sincere endeavors to do their duty; and therefore it certainly follows, that it is unjust in God not to give all opportunity to be saved or preserved from misery; and consequently, it is no fruit at all of any grace or kindness in him to give such opportunity, or to make the offer of it. So that, all that is the fruit of God's kindness in man's salvation, is the positive happiness that belongs to salvation. But neither of these two things are in any respect whatsoever the fruit of God's kind-

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ness, neither his deliverance from sin, nor from misery in his virtue and holiness; and when hereafter he shall see the misery of the damned, he will have it to consider, that it is owing in no respect to God that he is delivered from that misery. And that good men differ from others, that shall burn in hell to all eternity, is wholly owing to themselves. When they, at the day of judgment, shall behold some set on the left hand of the Judge, while they are on his right hand, and shall see how they differ, they may, and, as they would act according to truth, they ought to take all the glory of it unto themselves; and therefore the glory of their salvation belongs to them. For it is evident that a man's making himself to differ with regard to any great spiritual benefit, and his not receiving it from another, but his having it in distinction from others, being from himself, is ground of a man's boasting and glorying in himself, with respect to that benefit, and of boasting of it: I say, it is evident by the apostle's words, "Who maketh thee to differ? Why boastest thou, as though thou hadst not received it?" These words plainly imply it.

It is evident, that it is God's design to exclude man's boasting in the affair of his salvation. Now, let us consider what does give ground for boasting in the apostle's account, and what it is that in his account excludes boasting, or cuts off occasion for it. It is evident by what the apostle says, 1 Cor. i. latter end. that the entireness and universality of our dependence on God, is that which cuts off occasion of boasting; as, our receiving our wisdom, our holiness, and redemption through Christ, and not through ourselves; that Christ is made to us wisdom, justification, holiness and redemption; and not only so, but that it is of God that we have any part in Christ; *of him are ye in Christ Jesus*; Nay, further, that it is from God we receive those benefits of wisdom, holiness, &c. through the Saviour that we are interested in.

The import of all these things, if we may trust to Scripture representations is, that God has contrived to exclude our glorying; that we should be wholly and every way dependent on God, for the moral and natural good that belongs to salvation; and that we have all from the hand of God, by his

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power and grace. And certainly this is wholly inconsistent with the idea that our holiness is wholly from ourselves; and, that we are interested in the benefits of Christ rather than others, is wholly of our own decision. And that such an universal dependence is what takes away occasion of taking glory to ourselves, and is a proper ground of an ascription of all the glory of the things belonging to man's salvation to God, is manifest from Rom. xi. 35, 36. "Or who hath first given unto him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and to him, and through him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen."

The words are remarkable, and very significant. If we look into all the foregoing discourse, from the beginning of chapter ix. of which this is the conclusion, by not giving to God, but having all this wholly *from*, *through*, and *in God*, is intended that these things, these great benefits forementioned, are thus from God, without being from or through ourselves. That some of the Jews were distinguished from others in enjoying the privileges of Christians, was not of themselves; not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. It is of him who has mercy on whom he will have mercy. It is of God who makes of the same lump, a vessel of honor and a vessel unto dishonor. It is not of us, nor our works, but of the calling of God, or of him that calleth, chap. ix. 11, and 23, 24. Not first of our own choice, but of God's election, chap. ix. 11....27, and chap. xi. 5. It is all of the grace of God in such a manner, as not to be of our works at all; yea, and so as to be utterly inconsistent with its being of our works; chap. xi. 5, 6, 7. In such a manner as not first to be of their seeking; their seeking does not determine, but God's election; chap. xi. 7. It is of God, and not of man, that some were grafted in, that were wild olive branches in themselves, and were more unlikely as to any thing in themselves to be branches, than others, verse 17. Their being grafted in, is owing to God's distinguishing goodness, while he was pleased to use severity towards others, v. 22. Yea, God has so ordered it, on purpose that all should be shut up in unbelief; be left to be so sinful, that he

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might have mercy on all; so as more visibly to show the salvation of all to be merely dependent on mercy. Then the apostle fitly concludes all this discourse, Rom. xi. 35, 36. "Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and to him, and through him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Again, in the apostle's account, a benefit's being of our works, gives occasion for boasting, and therefore God has contrived that our salvation shall not be of our works, but of mere grace, Rom. iii. 27, Eph. ii. 9. And that neither the salvation, nor the condition of it, shall be of our works, but that, with regard to all, we are God's workmanship and his creation antecedently to our works; and his grace and power in producing this workmanship, and his determination or purpose with regard to them, are all prior to our works, and the cause of them. See also Rom. xi. 4, 5, 6.

And it is evident, that man's having virtue from himself, and not receiving it from another, and making himself to differ with regard to great spiritual benefits, does give ground for boasting, by the words of the apostle in Rom. iii. 27. And this is allowed by those men in spiritual gifts. And if so in them, more so in greater things; more so in that which in itself is a thousand times more excellent, and of ten thousand times greater importance and benefit.

By the Arminian scheme, that which is infinitely the most excellent thing, viz. virtue and holiness, which the apostle sets forth as being infinitely the most honorable, and will bring the subjects of it to infinitely the greatest and highest honor, that which is infinitely the highest dignity of man's nature of all things that belong to man's salvation; in comparison of which, all things belonging to that salvation are nothing; that which does infinitely more than any thing else constitute the difference between them and others, as more excellent, more worthy, more honorable and happy; this is from themselves. With regard to this, they have not received of another. With regard to this great thing, they, and they only, make themselves to differ from others; and this difference proceeds not at all from the power or grace of God.

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Again, in the apostle's account, this scheme will give occasion to have a great benefit, that appertains to salvation, not of grace, but of works.

Virtue is not only the most honorable attainment, but it is that which men, on the supposition of their being possessed of it, are more apt to glory in, than in any thing else whatsoever. For what are men so apt to glory in as their own supposed excellency, as in their supposed virtue? And what sort of glorying is that, which, it is evident in fact, the Scriptures do chiefly guard against? It is glorying in their own righteousness, their own holiness, their own good works.

It is manifest, that in the apostle's account, it is a proper consideration to prevent our boasting, that our distinction from others is not of ourselves, not only in being distinguished in having better gifts and better principles, but in our being made partakers of the great privileges of Christians, such as being engrafted into Christ, and partaking of the fatness of that olive tree. Rom. xi. 17, 18. "And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in amongst them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree, boast not against the branches."

Here it is manifest, it is the distinction that was made between some and others, that is the thing insisted on; and the apostle, verse 22, calls upon them to consider this great distinction, and to ascribe it to the distinguishing goodness of God only. "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness." And its being owing, not to them, but to God and his distinguishing goodness, is the thing the apostle urges as a reason why they should not boast, but magnify God's grace or distinguishing goodness. And if it be a good reason, and the scheme of our salvation be every way so contrived (as the apostle elsewhere signifies) that all occasion of boasting should be precluded, and all reasons given to ascribe all to God's grace; then it is doubtless so ordered, that the greatest privileges, excellency, honor and happiness of Christians, should be that wherein they do not distinguish themselves, but the difference is owing to God's distinguishing goodness.

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Stebbing strongly asserts, God is not the author of that difference that is between some and others, that some are good, and others bad.

§ 80. The Arminians differ among themselves. Dr. Whitby supposes what God does, is only proposing moral motives; but that in attending, adverting and considering, we exercise our liberty. But Stebbing supposes, that the attention and consideration is itself the thing owing to the Spirit of God; p. 217.

§ 81. Stebbing changes the question, pages 223, 224. He was considering who has the chief glory of our conversion, or of our virtue; and there, answering objections, endeavors to prove the affirmative of another question, viz. whether God is the author of that pardon and salvation, of which conversion and virtue are the condition.

§ 82. Stebbing supposes that one thing wherein the assistance of the Spirit consists, is the giving of a meek, teachable, disinterested temper of mind, to prepare men for faith in Christ; pages 217, 259, and that herein consists that drawing of the Father, John vi. 44, viz. in giving such a temper of mind.

This he calls the preventing grace of God, that goes before conversion. He often speaks of a part that we do, and a part that God does. And he speaks of this as that part which God does. Therefore this, if it be the part which God does, in distinction from the part which we do, (for so he speaks of it) is wholly done by God. And consequently, here is virtue wholly from God, and not at all from the exercise of our own free will; which is inconsistent with his own, and all other Arminian principles. Stebbing speaks of these preparatory dispositions as virtue, p. 30, 31, 32, yea, as that wherein virtue does in a peculiar manner consist, p. 31. And he there also, viz. page 259, talks inconsistently with himself; for he supposes that this meek and teachable temper is given by God, by his preventing grace; and also supposes, that all that have this,

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shall surely come to the Father. He says, page 256, "It is certainly true of the meek, disinterested man, that as he will not reject the gospel at first; so he will not be prevailed on by any worldly considerations to forsake it afterwards."

"He who is under no evil bias of mind, by which he may be prejudiced against the truth, (which is the notion of a meek and disinterested man) such a one, I say, cannot possibly fail of being wrought upon by the preaching of the word, which carries in it all that evidence of truth, which reason requires," &c. and his words, page 259, are, "John vi. 37, 39. All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me;" for to be given of the Father signifies the same thing with being drawn of the Father, as has been already shown. And to be drawn of the Father, signifies to be prepared or fitted for the reception of the gospel, by the preventing grace of God, as has also been proved. Now, this preparedness consisting, as has likewise been shown, in being endued with a meek and disinterested temper of mind; those who are given of the Father, will be the same with Christ's sheep. And the sense of the place is the same with the preceding, where our Saviour says that his sheep hear his voice and follow him, i. e. become his obedient disciples. This text, therefore, being no more than a declaration of what will be certain, and (morally speaking) the necessary effect of that disposition, upon the account of which men are said to be given of the Father, (to wit, that it will lead them to embrace the gospel, when once proposed to them.") By these things, the preventing grace of God, the part that God does, in distinction from the part that we do, and that which prevents or goes before what we do, thoroughly decides and determines the case as to our conversion, or our faith and repentance and obedience, notwithstanding all the hand our free will is supposed to have in the case; and which he supposes is what determines man's conversion; and insists upon it most strenuously and magisterially through his whole book. Stebbing supposes the influence of the Spirit necessary to prepare men's hearts, pages 15....18. He (pages 17, 18) speaks of this as what the Spirit does, and as being his preventing grace; and speaks of it as

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always effectual; so that all such, and only such as have it, will believe. See also pages 28....30.

That these dispositions must be effectual; see pages 46 ....48.

This teachable, humble, meek spirit, is what Stebbing speaks of every where as what the Spirit of God gives antecedent to obedience. He insists upon it, that God's assistance is necessary in order to obedience. In pages 20, 21, he plainly asserts that it is necessary in order to our obedience, and declares that our Saviour has asserted it in express terms in these words, John xv. 5. "Without me ye can do nothing;" i. e. as he says, no good thing. Hence it follows, that this teachable, humble, meek disposition, this good and honest heart, is not the fruit of any good thing we do in the exercise of our free will; but is merely the fruit of divine operation. Here observe well what Stebbing says concerning God's giving grace sufficient for obedience, in answer to prayer. Pages 103....106.

§ 83. No reason in the world can be given, why a meek, humble spirit, and sense of the importance of Christian things, should not be as requisite in order to acceptable prayer, as in order to acceptable hearing and believing the word. It is as much so spoken of. A praying without a good spirit in these and other respects, is represented as no prayer, as ineffectual, and what we have no reason to expect will be answered.

§ 84. If that meekness, &c. depends on some antecedent, selfdetermined act of theirs, and they be determined by that; then their being Christ's, being his sheep, and therein distinguished from others that are not his sheep, is not properly owing to the Father's gift, but to their own gift. The Father's pleasure is not the thing it is to be ascribed to at all; for the Father does nothing in the case decisively; he acts not at all freely in the case, but acts on an antecedent, firm obligation to the persons themselves; but their own pleasure, undetermined by God, is that which disposes and decides

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in the matter. How impertinent would it be to insist on the gift of the Father in this case, when the thing he speaks of is not from thence?

§ 85. He supposes that the assistance that God gives in order to obedience is giving this good and honest heart; see p. 46, 47, together with p. 40, 45; and therefore, this good and honest heart is not the fruit of our own obedience, but must be the fruit of assistance that precedes our good works, as he often calls it the preventing grace of God. And therefore, if this grace determines the matter, and will certainly be followed with faith and obedience, then all Arminianism, and his own scheme, comes to the ground.

§ 86. Stebbing interprets that passage, Luke xix. 16, 17, which speaks of our being little children, and receiving the kingdom of God as little children, of that meekness and humility, &c. that is antecedent to conversion, which it is apparent Christ elsewhere speaks of as consequent on conversion, as Matth. xviii.

§ 87. It is manifest the power of God overcomes resistance, and great resistance of some sort; otherwise there would be no peculiar greatness of power, as distinguishing it from the power of creatures, manifested in bringing men to be willing to be virtuous; which it is apparent there is, by Matth. xix. 26. "But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

§ 88. The Arminian scheme naturally, and by necessary consequence, leads men to take all the glory of all spiritual good (which is immensely the chief, most important and excellent thing in the whole creation) to ourselves; as much as if we, with regard to those effects, were the supreme, the first cause, selfexistent, and independent, and absolutely sovereign disposers. We leave the glory of only the meaner part of creation to God, and take to ourselves all the glory of

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that which is properly the life, beauty and glory of the creation, and without which it is all worse than nothing. So that there is nothing left for the great First and Last; no glory for either the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, in the affair. This is not carrying things too far, but is a consequence truly and certainly to be ascribed to their scheme of things.

§ 89. He may be said to be the giver of money that offers it to us, without being the proper determiner of our acceptance of it. But if the acceptance of an offer itself be the thing which is supposed to be given, he cannot, in any proper sense whatsoever, be properly said to be the giver of this, who is not the determiner of it. But it is the acceptance of offers, and the proper improvement of opportunities, wherein consists virtue. He may be said to be the giver of money or goods that does not determine the wise choice; but if the wise and good choice itself be said to be the thing given, it supposes that the giver determines the existing of such a wise choice. But now, this is the thing that God is represented as the giver of, when he is spoken of as the giver of virtue, holiness, &c. for virtue and holiness (as all our opponents in these controversies allow and maintain) is the thing wherein a wise and good choice consists.

§ 90. It is the common way of the Arminians, in their discourses and doctrines, which they pretend are so much more consistent with reason and common sense, than the doctrines of the Calvinists, to give no account at all, and make no proper answer to the inquiries made; and they do as Mr. Locke says of the Indian philosopher, who, when asked what the world stood upon, answered, it stood upon an elephant; and, when asked what the elephant stood upon, he replied, on a broadbacked turtle, &c. None of their accounts will bear to be traced. The first link of the chain, and the fountain of the whole stream, must not be inquired after. If it be, it brings all to a gross absurdity and selfcontradiction. And yet, when they have done, they look upon others as stupid bigots, and void of common sense, or at least going di-

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rectly counter to common sense, and worthy of contempt and indignation, because they will not agree with them.

§ 91. I suppose it will not be denied by any party of Christians, that the happiness of the saints in the other world consists much in perfect holiness and the exalted exercises of it; that the souls of the saints shall enter upon it at once at death; or (if any deny that) at least at the resurrection; that the saint is made perfectly holy as soon as ever he enters into heaven. I suppose none will say, that perfection is obtained by repeated acts of holiness; but all will grant, that it is wrought in the saint immediately by the power of God; and yet that it is virtue notwithstanding. And why are not the beginnings of holiness wrought in the same manner? Why should not the beginnings of an holy nature be wrought immediately by God in a soul that is wholly of a contrary nature, as well as holiness be perfected in a soul that has already a prevailing holiness? And if it be so, why is not the beginning, thus wrought, as much virtue as the perfection thus wrought?

§ 92. Saving grace differs, not only in degree, but in nature and kind, from common grace, or any thing that is ever found in natural men. This seems evident by the following things. 1. Because conversion is a work that is done at once, and not gradually. If saving grace differed only in degree from what went before, then the making a man a good man would be a gradual work; it would be the increasing of the grace that he has, till it comes to such a degree as to be saving, at least it would be frequently so. But that the conversion of the heart is not a work that is thus gradually wrought, but that it is wrought at once, appears by Christ's converting the soul being represented by his calling of it; Rom. viii. 28, 29, 30. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover,

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whom he did predestinate, them he also *called;* and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Acts ii. 37....39. "Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall *call.*" Heb. ix. 15. "That they which are *called* might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." 1 Thess. v. 23, 24. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: And I pray God, your whole spirit, soul and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that *calleth* you, who also will do it." Nothing else can be meant in these places *by calling*, but what Christ does in a sinner's saving conversion; by which it seems evident, that this is done at once, and not gradually. Hereby Christ shows his great power. He does but speak the powerful word, and it is done. He does but call, and the heart of the sinner immediately cometh, as was represented by his calling his disciples, and their immediately following him. So, when he called Peter and Andrew, James and John, they were minding other things, and had no thought of following Christ. But at his call they immediately followed him, Matth. iv. 18....22. Peter and Andrew were casting a net into the sea. Christ says unto them, as he passed by, Follow me; and it is said, they straightway left their nets and followed him. So James and John were in the ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets: And he called them; and immediately they left the ship, and their father, and followed him. So when Matthew was called; Matth. ix. 9. "And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom; and he saith unto him, Follow me: And he arose and followed him." The same circumstances are observed by other evangelists. Which, doubtless, is to represent the manner in which Christ effectually calls his disciples in all ages. There is something immediately put into their hearts, at that call, that is new, that there

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was nothing of there before, which makes them so immediately act in a manner altogether new, and so alien from what they were before.

That the work of conversion is wrought at once, is further evident, by its being compared to a work of creation. When God created the world, he did what he did immediately; he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. He said, let there be light, and there was light. Also by its being compared to a raising from the dead. Raising from the dead is not a gradual work, but it is done at once. God calls, and the dead come forth immediately. The change in conversion is in the twinkling of an eye; as that, 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. "We shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

It appears by the manner in which Christ wrought all those works that he wrought when on earth, that they were types of his great work of converting sinners. Thus, when he healed the leper, he put forth his hand and touched him, and said, "I will, be thou clean; and immediately his leprosy was cleansed." Matth. viii. 3. Mark i. 42. Luke v. 13. So, in opening the eyes of the blind men, Matth. xx. 30, &c. he touched their eyes, and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him. And so Mark x. 52. Luke xviii. 43. So, when he healed the sick, particularly Simon's wife's mother, he took her by her hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto him. So when the woman that had the issue of blood, touched the hem of Christ's garment, immediately her issue of blood stanched; Luke viii. 44. So the woman that was bowed together with the spirit of infirmity, when Christ laid his hands on her, immediately she was made straight, and glorified God; Luke xiii. 12, 13. So the man at the pool of Bethesda, when Christ bade him rise and take up his bed and walk, was immediately made whole; John v. 8, 9. After the same manner Christ raised the dead, and cast out devils, and stilled the winds and seas.

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2 There seems to be a specific difference between saving grace or virtue and all that was in the heart before, by the things that conversion is represented by in scripture; particularly by its being represented as a work of creation. When God creates, he does not merely establish and perfect the things that were made before, but makes them wholly and immediately. The things that are seen, are not made of things that do appear. Saving grace in the heart is said to be the new man, a new creature; and corruption the old man. If that virtue that is in the heart of an holy man, be not different in its nature and kind, then the man might possibly have had the same seventy years before, and from time to time, from the beginning of his life, and has it no otherwise now, but only in a greater degree: And how then is he a new creature?

Again, it is evident also from its being compared to a resurrection. Natural men are said to be dead: But when they are converted, they are by God's mighty and effectual power raised from the dead. Now, there is no medium between being dead and alive. He that is dead, has no degree of life. He that has the least degree of life in him, is alive. When a man is raised from the dead, life is not only in a greater degree, but it is all new. And this is further evident by that representation that is made of Christ's converting sinners, in John v. 25. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." This shews conversion to be an immediate and instantaneous work, like to the change made in Lazarus when Christ called him from the grave: There went life with the call, and Lazarus was immediately alive. That immediately before the call they are dead, and therefore wholly destitute of any life, is evident by that expression, "the dead shall hear the voice;" and immediately after the call, they are alive; yea, there goes life with the voice, as is evident not only because it is said they shall live, but also because it is said, they shall hear his voice. It is evident, that the first moment they have any life, is the moment when Christ calls; and when Christ calls, or as soon

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as they are called, they are converted; as is evident from what is said in the first argument, wherein it is shewn, that to be called, and converted, is the same thing.

3. Those that go farthest in religion, that are in a natural condition, have no charity, as is plainly implied in the beginning of the 13th chapter of the first of Corinthians; by which we must understand, that they have none of that kind of grace, or disposition or affection, that is so called. So Christ elsewhere reproves the Pharisees, those high pretenders to religion among the Jews, that they had not the love of God in them.

4. In conversion, stones are raised up to be children unto Abraham. While stones, they are wholly destitute of all those qualities that afterward render them the living children of Abraham; and not possessing them, though in a lesser degree.

Agreeably to this, conversion is represented by the taking away the heart of stone, and giving an heart of flesh. The man, while unconverted, has a heart of stone, which has no degree of that life or sense in it that the heart of flesh has; because it yet remains a stone; than which, nothing is farther from life and sense.

5. A wicked man has none of that principle of nature that a godly man has, as is evident by 1 John iii. 9. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

The natural import of the metaphor shows, that by a seed, is meant a principle of action: It may be small as a grain of mustard seed. A seed is a small thing; it may be buried up and lie hid, as the seed sown in the earth; it may seem to be dead, as seeds for a while do, till quickened by the sun and rain. But any degree of such a principle, or a principle of such a nature, is what is called the seed; it need not be to such a degree, or have such a prevalency, in order to be called a seed. And it is further evident that this seed, or this inward principle of nature, is peculiar to the saints; for he that has that seed, cannot sin; and therefore he that sins, or is a wicked man, has it not.

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6. Natural men, or those that are not savingly converted, have no degree of that principle from whence all gracious actings flow, viz. the Spirit of God or of Christ; as is evident, because it is asserted both ways in scripture, that those who have not the Spirit of Christ, are not his, Rom. vii. 9, and also, that those who have the Spirit of Christ, are his; 1 John iii. 24. "Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." And the Spirit of God is called the earnest of the future inheritance, 2 Cor. i. 22, and v. 5. Eph. i. 14. Yea, that a natural man has nothing of the Spirit in him, no part nor portion in it, is still more evident, because the *having of the Spirit* is given as a sure sign of being in Christ. 1 John iv. 13. "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, because he hath given us of his Spirit." By which it is evident, that they have none of that holy principle, that the godly have. And if they have nothing of the Spirit, they have nothing of those things that are the fruits of the Spirit, such as those mentioned in Gal. v. 22. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." These fruits are here mentioned with the very design, that we may know whether we have the Spirit or no. In the 18th verse, the apostle tells the Galatians, that if they are led by the Spirit, they are not under the law; and then directly proceeds, first, to mention what are the fruits or works of the flesh, and then, nextly, what are the fruits of the Spirit, that we may judge whether we are led by the Spirit or no.

7. That natural men, or those that are not born again, have nothing of that grace that is in godly men, is evident by John iii. 6, where Christ, speaking of regeneration, says, "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit." By flesh is here meant nature, and by Spirit is meant grace, as is evident by Gal. v. 16, 17. Gal. vi. 8. 1 Cor. iii. 1. Rom. viii. 7. That is Christ's very argument; by this it is that Christ in those words would show Nicodemus the necessity of regeneration, that by the first birth we have nothing but nature, and can have nothing else without being born again; by which it is exceeding evident, that

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they that are not born again, have nothing else. And that natural men have not the Spirit is evident, since by this text with the context it is most evident that those who have the Spirit, have it by regeneration. It is born in them; it comes into them no otherwise than by birth, and that birth is in regeneration, as is most evident by the preceding and following verses. In godly men there are two opposite principles: The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; as Gal. v. 25. But it is not so with natural men. Rebekah, in having Esau and Jacob struggle together in her womb, was a type only of the true *Church*.

8. Natural men have nothing of that nature in them which true Christians have; and that appears, because the nature they have is divine nature. The saints alone have it. Not only they alone partake of such degrees of it, but they alone are partakers of it. To be a partaker of the divine nature is mentioned as peculiar to the saints, in 2 Pet. i. 4. It is evident it is the true saints the apostle is there speaking of. The words in this verse and the foregoing, run thus: "According as his divine power hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature; having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." Divine nature and lust are evidently here spoken of as two opposite principles in men. Those that are of the world, or that are the men of the world, have only the latter principle. But to be partakers of the divine nature, is spoken of as peculiar to them that are distinguished and separated from the world, by the free and sovereign grace of God giving them all things that pertain to life and godliness; by giving the knowledge of Christ, and calling them to glory and virtue; and giving them the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel, and enabling them to escape the corruption of the world of wicked men. It is spoken of, not only as peculiar to the saints, but as the highest privilege of saints.

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9. A natural man has no degree of that relish and sense of spiritual things, or things of the Spirit, and of their divine truth and excellency, which a godly man has; as is evident by 1 Cor. ii. 14. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Here a natural man is represented as perfectly destitute of any sense, perception, or discerning of those things. For by the words, he neither does, nor can know them or discern them. So far from it, that they are foolishness unto him. He is such a stranger to them, that he knows not what the talk of such things means; they are words without a meaning to him; he knows nothing of the matter, any more than a blind man of colors. Hence it will follow, that the sense of things of religion that a natural man has, is not only not to the same degree, but is not of the same nature with what a godly man has. Besides, if a natural person has that fruit of the Spirit, which is of the same kind with what a spiritual person has, then he experiences within himself the things of the Spirit of God. How then can he be said to be such a stranger to them, and have no perception or discerning of them? The reason why natural men have no knowledge of spiritual things, is, that they have nothing of the Spirit of God dwelling in them. This is evident by the context. For there we are told it is by the Spirit these things are taught, verse 10....12. Godly persons, in the text we are upon, are called spiritual, evidently on this account, that they have the Spirit; and unregenerate men are called natural men, because they have nothing but nature. Hereby the 6th argument is continued. For natural men are in no degree spiritual; they have only nature, and no Spirit. If they had any thing of the Spirit, though not in so great a degree as the godly, yet they would be taught spiritual things, or the things of the Spirit in proportion; the Spirit, that searcheth all things, would teach them in some measure. There would not be so great a difference, that the one could perceive nothing of them, and that they should be foolishness to them, while, to the other, they appear divinely and unspeakably wise and ex-

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cellent, as they are spoken of in the context, verses 6....9, and as such, the apostle speaks here of discerning them. The reason why natural men have no knowledge or perception of spiritual things, is, that they have none of that anointing spoken of, 1 John ii. 27. "But the anointing, which ye have received of him, abideth in you, and ye need not that any man should teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

This anointing is evidently here spoken of, as a thing peculiar to true saints. Sinners never had any of that oil poured upon them; and because ungodly men have none of it, therefore they have no discerning of spiritual things. If they had any degree of it, they would discern in some measure. Therefore, none of that sense that natural men have of spiritual things, is of the same nature with what the godly have. And that natural men are wholly destitute of this knowledge, is further evident, because conversion is represented in scripture by opening the eyes of the blind. But this would be very improperly so represented, if a man might have some sight, though not so clear and full, time after time, for scores of years before his conversion.

10. The grace of God's Spirit is not only a precious oil with which Christ anoints the believer by giving it to him, but the believer anoints Christ with it, by exercising it towards him; which seems to be represented by the precious ointment Mary poured on Christ's head. Herein it seems to me, that Mary is a type of Christ's church, and of every believing soul. And if so, doubtless the thing in which she typifies the Church, has in it something peculiar to the church. There would not be a type ordered on purpose to represent the church, that shall represent only something that is common to the church and others. Therefore unbelievers pour none of that sweet and precious ointment on Christ.

11. That unbelievers have no degree of that grace that the saints have, is evident, because they have no communion with Christ: If unbelievers partook of any of that Spirit,

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those holy inclinations, affections and actings that the godly have from the Spirit of Christ, then they would have communion with Christ. The communion of saints with Christ, does certainly consist in receiving of his fulness, and partaking of his grace, which is spoken of, John i. 16. "Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace." And the partaking of that Spirit which God gives not by measure unto him, the partaking of Christ's holiness and grace, his nature, inclinations, tendencies, affections, love, desires, must be a part of communion with him. Yea, a believer's communion with God and Christ, does mainly consist in partaking of the Holy Spirit, as is evident by 2 Cor. xiii. 14. But that unbelievers have no communion or fellowship with Christ, appears, 1st. Because they are not united to Christ, they are not in Christ. Those that are not in Christ, or are not united to him, can have no degree of communion with him; for union with Christ, or a being in Christ, is the foundation of all communion with him. The union of the members with the head, is the foundation of all their communion or partaking with the head; and so the union of the branch with the vine, is the foundation of all the communion it has with the vine, of partaking of any degree of its sap or life, or influence. So the union of the wife to the husband, is the foundation of her communion in his goods. But no natural man is united to Christ; because all that are in Christ shall be saved; 1 Cor. xv. 22. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive;" i. e. all that are in Christ; for this speaks only of the glorious resurrection and eternal life. Phil. iii. 8, 9. "Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found *in him*, not having on my own righteousness," &c. 2 Cor. v. 17. "Now, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 1 John ii. 5. "Hereby know we that we are in him." Chap. iii. 24. "And he that keepeth his commandments, *dwelleth in him, and he in him*, and hereby we know *that he abideth in us*,"

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&c. and iv. 12. "Hereby know we that *we dwell in him, and he in us.*"

2d. The Scripture does more directly teach, that it is only true saints that have communion with Christ; as, particularly, this is most evidently spoken of as what belongs to the saints, and to them only, in 1 John i. 3....7. "That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another; and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." And 1 Cor. i. 8, 9. "Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." By this it appears that those who have fellowship with Christ, are those that cannot fall away, whom God's faithfulness is bound to confirm to the end, that they may be blameless in the day of Jesus Christ.

§ 93. Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones is a confirmation, that however natural men may be the subjects of great and wonderful influences and operations of God's great power and Spirit; yet they do not properly partake at all of the Spirit before conversion. In all that is wrought in them, in every respect fitting and preparing them for grace, so that nothing shall be wanting but divine life; yet as long as they are without this, they have nothing of the Spirit. Which confirms the distinctions I have elsewhere made, of the Spirit of God influencing the minds of natural men under common illuminations and convictions, and yet not communicating himself in his own proper nature to them, before conversion; and that saving grace differs from common grace, not only in degree, but also in nature and kind. It is said, Rev. iii. 8, of the church at Philadelphia, which is commended above all other churches, *Thou hast a little strength*....certainly implying, that ungodly men have none at all.

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§ 94. That there is no good work before conversion and actual union with Christ, is manifest from that, Rom. vii. 4. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ, that ye should be married unto another, even to him who is raised from the dead; that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Hence we may argue, that there is no lawful child brought forth before that marriage. Seeming virtues and good works before, are not so indeed. They are a spurious brood, being bastards, and not children.

§ 95. That those thst prove apostates, never have the same kind of faith with true saints, is confirmed by what Christ said of Judas, before his apostasy, John vi. 64. "But there are some of you, who believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him." By this it is evident, that Judas, who afterwards proved an apostate, (and is doubtless set forth as an example for all apostates) though he had a kind of faith in Christ, yet did not believe in Christ with a true faith, and was at that time, before his apostasy, destitute of that kind of faith which the true disciples had; and that he had all along, even from the beginning, been destitute of that faith. And by the 70, and 71st verses of the same chapter, it is evident that he was not only destitute of that degree of goodness that the rest had, but totally destitute of Christian picty, and wholly under the dominion of wickedness; being in this respect like a devil, notwithstanding all the faith and temporary regard to Christ that he had. "Jesus answered them, Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. For he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve."

END OF THE FIFTH VOLUME.

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